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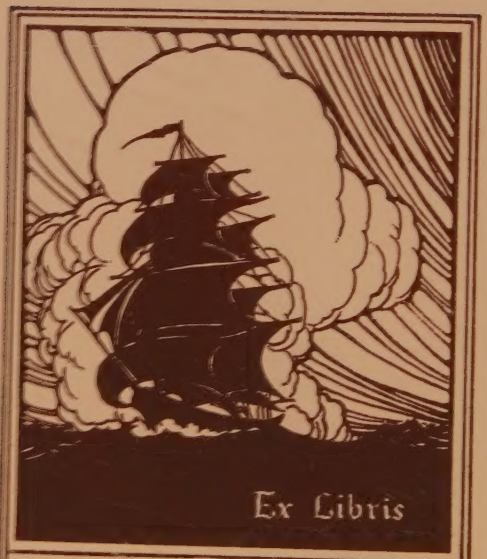

Irvin W. Batdorf

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SIX LECTURES

ON THE

ANTE-NICENE FATHERS.

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ANTE-NICENE FATHERS

BY

FENTON JOHN ANTHONY HORT D.D.

SOMETIME HULSEAN PROFESSOR AND LADY MARGARET'S READER
IN DIVINITY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE.

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PREFATORY NOTE.

THESE lectures were delivered by my father to the Clergy Training School at Cambridge in the Lent Term of 1890.

They are almost the only popular lectures which he gave: they are of a widely different character from his other lectures on Church History now in course of publication, and will appeal perhaps to a rather wider circle of readers. Though popular in treatment, they were however composed with all Dr Hort's accustomed care: he had had some idea of revising them for publication. The text of each lecture was written out in full, and the illustrative extracts from the works of the Fathers were read in translations partly published, partly of his own making: these characteristic

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specimens of writers of whose permanent value he was strongly convinced, will, it is hoped, be found not the least useful part of the volume, such a collection of passages not being easily accessible elsewhere. There is some uncertainty as to the limits of one of the passages quoted, that from Justin Martyr, but I hope that those here printed are substantially the extracts read in the course of each lecture. The quotations from Clement, Ignatius and Polycarp are taken from Bishop Lightfoot's *Apostolic Fathers*, that from Justin Martyr from the Rev. G. Reith's translation in the "Ante-Nicene Christian Library," with some alterations adopted from pencilled notes in Dr Hort's copy: for the two passages from Origen I am responsible, and have made use of the Rev. Dr Crombie's version in the same series: I could not discover whether the lecturer here used any published or manuscript translation. The two extracts from Irenæus were transcribed by Dr Hort himself.

A. F. HORT.

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LECTURE I.

CLEMENT OF ROME AND HERMAS.

THE lectures which I hope to deliver this term are intended to have for their subject "Some early Fathers of the Church." In this description of the proposed subject the word "Fathers" means simply what it means in common usage, the Christian writers of the early Christian centuries. In one literal sense they might be called Fathers, viz. as being the parents of the Christian thought and belief and life of later centuries, which, however modified and altered by the inward and outward changes arising in the course of time, retain always down to the present day important features inherited from the peculiar circumstances of the centuries which followed the Apostolic age.

But, although it is important to remember that our own thoughts, and the thoughts of all

Christians everywhere, have been in a great measure thus shaped for us by the thoughts of the early Fathers, it is not on account of this fact that we call them Fathers, but rather in gratitude and veneration for them as the patriarchs of Christendom, speaking to us still out of that early dawn of the Christian period of history, and often speaking to us out of the fiery trial of persecution. But it would be a misuse of this legitimate reverence to treat the words of the Fathers as oracles appointed to dictate to us what we ought to believe. If we read their words with an open and teachable mind, we shall often find there abundant help and instruction, but the responsibility will always lie upon us of weighing and testing what we read, to the best of our power. We must not be surprised if we sometimes find much dross, for each age has its own limitations and vagaries, and, besides these, each man in each age has his own limitations and vagaries, some more, some less.

Again it is not really possible to measure the comparative worth of the Fathers, one with another, merely by their comparative antiquity. There is no doubt a peculiar freshness

in the best writings of quite the earliest time, the only time which can with any propriety share with the Apostolic Age the much misused and slippery epithet "primitive." But the greatest of the Fathers belong to later times, and different later times, when in doctrine and in institutions and in various other things pertaining to Christian life, great and unavoidable changes had taken place, changes that were on the whole for good and belonging to healthy growth, but also by no means free from loss, from injurious onesidedness, and from corruption. In what we call the age of the Fathers there was anything rather than a uniform state of things. Movement was at that time more rapid than probably at any later time of Christian history.

There are several comparatively distinct subjects which might properly enough be lectured about or written about in connexion with the Fathers. They might serve as a thread for speaking about Church History generally, or about the History of doctrine, of course in either case within the limits of their own time. Or again they might, with more obvious fitness, be taken as the heads of the corresponding history of Christian literature. The

time at our disposal will not however allow us to follow any of these lines, unless it be incidentally and to a small extent. I wish rather to do what I can towards putting before you the leading Fathers of the earliest centuries as living men, the children of a particular time, and to give some account of the purpose and character of their chief works, illustrated by translated extracts which may help towards the formation of individual impressions that may remain associated with their respective names.

It is well to keep in mind throughout that only a small part of the actual Christian literature of the early centuries is now preserved to us. Not only many books, but all the books of many authors, have completely perished. Of others we possess only scanty fragments. On the other hand, when we observe the neglect or even dislike with which the Ante-Nicene Christian literature, with very limited exceptions, was regarded by most of the Christian theologians of later days, we can hardly be too thankful that so much has been preserved; and moreover that what has been preserved has so representative a character, that is, supplies us with substantial and important examples of

different times, different schools, and different churches. Again it is a striking and encouraging fact that so many lost works, or lost portions of works, belonging to this period have come to light within the last forty years. Nor is there any reason to believe that we have come to the end of discoveries of this kind.

The Fathers of whom I propose to speak to-day belong to the small group to which it has been usual for above two hundred years to give the rather unmeaning name Apostolic Fathers, that is, preeminently Clement of Rome, Hermas, Ignatius, and Polycarp. In the opinion of many the earliest extant Christian writing outside the New Testament is the remarkable little manual of Christian morals and ecclesiastical instruction calling itself the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles, now familiarly known as the Didache, which was discovered and published a few years ago. It may however be considerably later: and at all events it lies too near the edge of our subject to need more than this passing word of notice.

We begin then with Clement of Rome. The little that is really known about him will be best found in Dr Lightfoot's admirable edition, and

still more in the Appendix which he published eight years later, in which he has carefully sifted the mass of ancient legend and modern speculation which has gathered round Clement's name. Some pages of his Philippians are also worth reading in the same connexion. The apparent time when the Epistle was written and the apparent personal position of Clement are both remarkable. Some thirty years had passed, what is counted a generation, since the persecution of Nero, some twenty-five years since the fall of Jerusalem, the greatest as well as most awful of events for all Christians. For the Empire, after all the frightful turmoil which had followed the death of Nero, a happier time had already begun with the accession of Vespasian, a period Dr Merivale says "distinguished by the general prosperity of the administration, the tranquil obedience of the people, and (with a single exception) by the virtue and public spirit of the rulers." Vespasian's son Titus had succeeded, and then his other son Domitian, his reign being the one exception to the comparative brightness of the series of eight. Always capricious and suspicious, the emperor shewed these qualities in an extreme form about the years A.D. 95, 96, the last of his life. Among

his victims were his own first cousin and niece's husband, Flavius Clemens, the father of the two reputed heirs to the empire. This Clemens was executed, and his wife exiled, both apparently as having become Christians. The Clement who wrote our Epistle was, it would seem, a freedman or freedman's son in their household, and had in this manner received his name. Everything in his letter shews that he must have been long a Christian himself, so that his mind would naturally be saturated, as we find it, with the language and ideas of the Old Testament, the only Scriptures, properly so called, for Christians at this early time, even if he was not previously, as is possible, a Jew of the Dispersion. His precise position in the Roman Church is difficult to ascertain. Two or three generations later, when the early constitution of the European Churches had been forgotten, he was placed in the series of early Bishops of Rome. But, as Dr Lightfoot has shewn (Phil. p. 218, ed. 8), it is difficult to reconcile his holding such an office with the language of the Epistle itself, or with other indications as to the constitution of the Church of Rome at a somewhat later time. But he

must certainly have been a man of importance and influence in the Church to be entrusted with the duty of writing such an Epistle, even if he was not the Clement to whom the book of Hermas' Visions (to which we shall come shortly) was to be sent for sending on to the cities away from Rome, that task, it is said, having been entrusted to him.

The Epistle itself starts with a salutation resembling those of the Apostolic Epistles, beginning "The Church of God which sojourns at Rome to the Church of God which sojourns at Corinth." The first words of the letter itself shew the state of things at Rome. "Because of the sudden and quickly succeeding misfortunes and calamities happening to us, brethren, we deem that we have been somewhat slow in giving attention to the matters that are in dispute among you." Thus the Epistle was written during or soon after the persecution which fell on the Roman Christians in those last months of Domitian's reign, the first persecution of which we have any knowledge after the persecution of Nero and the immediately following time of confusion.

The purpose of this the first extant writing

of a Christian Father is the promotion of peace, the restoration of a divided and disorderly Christian community to the concord and order implied in the very idea of Church-membership. At the outset the Roman Church commends warmly the previous temper and conduct shewn by the Corinthian Church, and then especially those ways of theirs to which the present state of things stood in the strongest contrast[1]. In place of all this had now come what is called (1) a vile and unholy sedition (or quarrel, στάσις), kindled by a few headlong and self-willed persons to a pitch of madness which had brought their honourable name into disgrace. It had arisen, we read further on, from contumacy shewn against some of the elders of the Church, who had been thrust aside without having deserved it (44, 47, 57, etc.). This conduct is traced back (3 fin.) to "an unrighteous and impious jealousy" (ζῆλος), a jealousy of which examples are given as leading to great crimes and misfortunes in the times of the Old Testament, and now again as leading to the martyr deaths of Peter and Paul and many others of those who are called "elect." These admonitions the Roman Church then

[1] Lightfoot, *Clement of Rome*, Appendix, p. 346.

takes up as addressed equally to themselves: "we are in the same arena, and the same contest awaits us." "Let us hearken (9) to His majestic and glorious purpose, and coming as suppliants of His mercy and graciousness let us fall down [before Him] and turn to His compassions, abandoning the labouring that is vain and the strife and the jealousy that leads to death." Then follow examples of those "who have ministered perfectly to God's majestic glory" by obedience or faith or in other like ways, beginning with Enoch, Noah, and Abraham, the words of the Old Testament being copiously cited as well as the lives of its holy men.

"The humility therefore and the submissiveness of so many and so great men, who have thus obtained a good report, hath through obedience made better not only us but also the generations which were before us, even them that received His oracles in fear and truth. Seeing then that we have been partakers of many great and glorious doings, let us hasten to return unto the goal of peace which hath been handed down to us from the beginning, and let us look steadfastly unto the Father and Maker of the whole world, and cleave unto His

splendid and excellent gifts of peace and benefits. Let us behold Him in our mind, and let us look with the eyes of our soul unto His long-suffering will. Let us note how free from anger He is towards all His creatures.

"The heavens are moved by His direction and obey Him in peace. Day and night accomplish the course assigned to them by Him, without hindrance one to another. Moreover, the inscrutable depths of the abysses and the unutterable statutes of the nether regions are constrained by the same ordinances. The basin of the boundless sea, gathered together by His workmanship into its reservoirs, passeth not the barriers wherewith it is surrounded; but even as He ordered it, so it doeth. For He said, 'So far shalt thou come, and thy waves shall be broken within thee.' The ocean which is impassable for men, and the worlds beyond it, are directed by the same ordinances of the Master. The seasons of spring and summer and autumn and winter give way in succession one to another in peace. The winds in their several quarters at their proper season fulfil their ministry without disturbance; and the ever-flowing fountains, created for enjoyment and health, without fail

give their breasts which sustain the life of men. Yea, the smallest of living things come together in concord and peace. All these things the great Creator and Master of the universe ordered to be in peace and concord, doing good unto all things, but far beyond the rest unto us who have taken refuge in His compassionate mercies through our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory and the majesty for ever and ever. Amen[1]."

Then follows a series of chapters of religious exhortation in the same lofty strain, ending with texts thus introduced.

"This is the way, dearly-beloved, wherein we found our salvation, even Jesus Christ the High-priest of our offerings, the Guardian and Helper of our weakness. Through Him let us look steadfastly unto the heights of the heavens; through Him we behold as in a mirror His faultless and most excellent visage; through Him the eyes of our hearts were opened; through Him our foolish and darkened mind springeth up unto the light; through Him the Master willeth that we should taste of the immortal knowledge; 'Who being the brightness of His

[1] Lightfoot, *Clement of Rome*, Appendix, pp. 355 foll.

majesty is so much greater than angels, as He hath inherited a more excellent name.' For so it is written; 'Who maketh His angels spirits and His ministers a flame of fire'; but of His Son the Master said thus; 'Thou art my Son, I this day have begotten Thee. Ask of me, and I will give Thee the Gentiles for Thine inheritance, and the ends of the earth for Thy possession.' And again He saith unto Him; 'Sit thou on My right hand, until I make Thine enemies a footstool for Thy feet.' Who then are these enemies? They that are wicked and resist His will[1]."

The original subject of the Epistle returns in a fresh exposition of the necessity and Divineness of order.

"The great without the small cannot exist, neither the small without the great" (according to the wise Greek proverb). "All the members breathe together and join in one [common] subjection that the whole body may be saved." This spirit of order is traced in the Mosaic legislation, and in the office and work of the apostles who received the Gospel for us from Jesus Christ, even as He was sent forth from

[1] Lightfoot, *Clement of Rome*, Appendix, p. 364.

God. The details of what is said about the appointments of elders or men having oversight by the Apostles would need more time to discuss than we can give. Again and again the original evil state of things at Corinth is touched on, and then always there is a return to the setting forth of the right spirit which would make such scandals impossible. In these later chapters there is special insistence on love as, so to speak, the deepest root of the matter, as it had been set forth by St Paul in writing to that same Corinthian Church. The demand which it makes for self-suppression and self-surrender is illustrated by examples both from among God's saints of old and from among heathens who sacrificed themselves for their fellow-citizens. "These things have they done and will do, that live as citizens of that commonwealth of God for belonging to which there is no regret" (54).

As the end of the Epistle draws near, the Romans by the mouth of Clement declare themselves now guiltless of the sin of the Corinthian malcontents, should it be persevered in; and break forth in a prayer equally memorable for its own sake and for the large borrowings from it which are found in various later

Greek liturgies. It begins with asking that we may hope on Thy Name, &c. "Grant unto us, Lord, that we may set our hope on Thy Name which is the primal source of all creation, and open the eyes of our hearts, that we may know Thee, who alone 'abidest Highest in the highest, Holy in the holy; who layest low the insolence of the proud, who scatterest the imaginings of nations; who settest the lowly on high, and bringest the lofty low; who makest rich and makest poor'; who 'killest and makest alive'; who alone art the Benefactor of spirits and the God of all flesh; who 'lookest into the abysses,' who scannest the works of man; the Succour of them that are in peril, the 'Saviour of them that are in despair'; the Creator and Overseer of every spirit; who, multipliest the nations upon earth, and hast chosen out from all men those that love Thee through Jesus Christ, Thy beloved Son, through whom Thou didst instruct us, didst sanctify us, didst honour us. We beseech Thee, Lord and Master, to be our help and succour. Save those among us who are in tribulation; have mercy on the lowly; lift up the fallen; shew Thyself unto the needy; heal the ungodly; convert the wanderers of Thy

people; feed the hungry; release our prisoners; raise up the weak, comfort the faint-hearted. Let all the Gentiles know that 'Thou art God alone' and Jesus Christ is Thy Son and 'we are Thy people and the sheep of Thy pasture[1]'." The prayer for the Christian community presently expands into universality ("Give concord and peace both to us and to all that inhabit the earth"); and then, in the true spirit of St Paul and St Peter, specially makes supplication for the rulers of the Roman empire, "Thou through Thine operations didst make manifest the everlasting fabric of the world. Thou, Lord, didst create the earth. Thou that art faithful throughout all generations, righteous in Thy judgments, marvellous in strength and excellence, Thou that art wise in creating and prudent in establishing that which Thou hast made, that art good in the things which are seen and faithful with them that trust on Thee, pitiful and compassionate, forgive us our iniquities and our unrighteousness and our transgressions and shortcomings. Lay not to our account every sin of Thy servants and Thine handmaids, but cleanse us with the cleansing of Thy truth, and

[1] Lightfoot, *Clement of Rome*, Appendix, p. 376.

guide our steps to walk in holiness and righteousness and singleness of heart and to do such things as are good and well-pleasing in Thy sight and in the sight of our rulers. Yea, Lord, make Thy face to shine upon us in peace for our good, that we may be sheltered by Thy mighty hand and delivered from every sin by Thine uplifted arm. And deliver us from them that hate us wrongfully. Give concord and peace to us and to all that dwell on the earth, as Thou gavest to our fathers, when they called on Thee in faith and truth with holiness, that we may be saved, while we render obedience to Thine almighty and most excellent Name, and to our rulers and governors upon the earth.

"Thou, Lord and Master, hast given them the power of sovereignty through Thine excellent and unspeakable might, that we knowing the glory and honour which Thou hast given them may submit ourselves unto them, in nothing resisting Thy will. Grant unto them therefore, O Lord, health, peace, concord, stability, that they may administer the government which Thou hast given them without failure. For Thou, O heavenly Master, King of the ages, givest to the sons of men glory and honour and

power over all things that are upon the earth. Do Thou, Lord, direct their counsel according to that which is good and well-pleasing in Thy sight, that, administering in peace and gentleness with godliness the power which Thou hast given them, they may obtain Thy favour. O Thou, who alone art able to do these things and things far more exceeding good than these for us, we praise Thee through the High-priest and Guardian of our souls, Jesus Christ, through whom be the glory and the majesty unto Thee both now and for all generations and for ever and ever. Amen[1]."

The Epistle closes with a few more quiet sentences on its principal theme, and with the commendation of two members of the Roman Church sent as bearers of the letter, "faithful and prudent men, that from youth to old age have walked blamelessly among us, who shall also be witnesses between you and us."

The unaffected loftiness of this Epistle of Clement of Rome, and its position at the head of post-biblical Christian literature, have been a temptation to give it a somewhat disproportionate amount of time. What is called the second

[1] Lightfoot, *Clement of Rome*, Appendix, pp. 377 foll.

Epistle of Clement, really an anonymous homily, a generation or two later in date, may be left alone, though important for the history of doctrine. It is rather eccentric in character, though less so than the early Epistle which bears the name of Barnabas. Whoever may be the author of that Epistle, he was certainly not the Barnabas of the New Testament; and though full of points of interest to advanced students, the Epistle is one which for our purpose may be passed over with little loss.

After Clement of Rome we come to Hermas of Rome. We need not trouble ourselves about his precise date, which is much disputed. At earliest he was a contemporary of Clement, at latest half a century later. He was a brother, possibly an elder brother, of Pius, who was bishop of Rome about the middle of the second century. He was evidently a layman, apparently engaged in commercial pursuits. By birth, according to his first words, he was a slave. His book, which from an early time was called *The Shepherd*, was read in various churches in the first centuries; and the Latin translation, which till lately was the only form known of it, had a certain popularity in Western Europe in

the Middle Ages so that it is even found in or after the Old Testament in several manuscripts of the Latin Bible. It has often been compared to the Pilgrim's Progress, and with good reason. It contains in an imaginative form the thoughts and brooding of a simple-minded devout man, on whom the evil that he feels within him and sees around him lies as a heavy burden, more especially the evil which he cannot help recognising within the Church itself, the holy society of God's own chosen people. 'Repentance' is perhaps the idea that he cherishes most. He is entirely free from bitterness or arrogance; and the message which he delivers he delivers not as from himself but as entrusted to him by one or other kind of Divine messenger.

The first part of the book consists of five Visions. In the first he receives a rebuke for a sinful thought of his own; and then presently for his tolerating the misdeeds of his children, which had brought loss upon him. The speaker in the latter part of this vision is an aged lady in bright apparel, sitting on a seat of snow-white wool; who in the second vision is revealed to him to be not as he supposed, the Sibyl, but the Church. The third vision, a very striking

one, is chiefly of a tower in process of building upon the waters, made of squared shining stones, i.e. again the Church, built of men (living stones, as St Peter would say) who fit rightly into their place, other stones being partially or wholly cast away. In the fourth vision a great monster from whose mouth proceed fiery locusts is seen and interpreted to be the great tribulation, which is approaching to try the faint-hearted and double-minded that they may be purified for God's use. The fifth vision in a manner includes the rest (above three-fourths) of the book. It begins thus: "When I had been praying in my house, and had seated myself on the bed, there came in a certain man of glorious appearance, in the guise of a shepherd, clothed in a white (goat's) skin, and having a wallet on his shoulders and a staff in his hand. And he greeted me, and I returned his greeting. And straightway he sat down beside me and saith to me, 'I have been sent by the angel of highest dignity, that I may dwell with thee the remaining days of thy life'." The shepherd presently bids him write down the commandments and the parables which he would declare to him. He is then described as the Shepherd, the angel of repentance.

Thenceforth he reappears several times, almost to the end of the book.

Then come twelve Commandments, as they are called. The first is a short one, "First of all believe that God is One, He who created and fashioned all things, and made all things out of what is not [bringing them] into being, and containeth all things, but alone is uncontained. Trust Him therefore and fear Him, and fearing practise self-restraint. Keep these things, and thou shalt cast from thyself all wickedness, and put on every virtue of righteousness, and shalt live to God, if thou keepest this commandment." The subjects of the other commandments are truthfulness, chastity, long-suffering, the ways and the angels of good and of evil, right and wrong fear, right and wrong abstinence, the need of faith for prayer, the evil of a gloomy spirit, the true and the false prophet, good and evil desire.

After the twelve Commandments come ten (or more strictly nine) Parables or Similitudes. They are almost wholly taken from country scenes and agricultural or pastoral occupations, specially from vines and other trees. Perhaps the most interesting is the eighth. The angel

shews Hermas "a great willow-tree, overshadowing plains and mountains, and under the shade of the willow had come all that have been called by the Name of the Lord." This mighty tree which overshadowed plains and mountains and all the earth, is explained to be the Law of God which was given "to go forth into all the world: and this law is the Son of God proclaimed unto the ends of the earth; and the peoples that are under the shade are they that heard the proclamation and believed on Him." These last words refer to the next incident of the parable: "There stood an angel of the Lord glorious exceedingly, in height above the willow tree, holding a great reaping-hook, and he cut down branch after branch from the willow, and gave to the people that were overshadowed by the willow.....And after that all had received their twigs, the angel laid aside his reaping-hook, and the tree was sound just as I had seen it before." Presently the angel asks back the twigs, and receives them one by one, some withered and gnawed as by a moth, others withered only, others half withered, others half withered and cracked, and so on in various gradations to those which were wholly green and clothed with

fresh shoots and fruit. Those who had held these last were crowned with palm-leaves. This is perhaps the most remarkable example of the just and truthful habit of mind which leads Hermas in various places to mark the various gradations in which good and evil are actually mixed in the hearts and lives of men. The Shepherd invites Hermas to join in planting the other twigs, which in various degrees had lost their greenness, if perchance some of them might live when they have been duly watered: for, said the Shepherd, "He that created this tree willeth that all should live who have received branches from this tree."

With these words we may part company from Hermas.

LECTURE II.

IGNATIUS AND POLYCARP.

LAST week we had for our subject the two earliest Christian Fathers belonging to the Roman Church, Clement of Rome the writer of the Epistle sent by the Church of Rome to the Church of Corinth, and Hermas the writer of the book of Visions, Commandments, and Parables which takes the name '*The Shepherd*' from the prominent part played in it by the Angel of Repentance, who appeared to Hermas in the guise of a shepherd. To-day we proceed to the others of the Fathers commonly called Apostolic, who have special claims to be remembered. These are Ignatius of Antioch and Polycarp of Smyrna.

The names of these cities remind us at once that we are passing into very different worlds from that world which immediately surrounded

Clement and Hermas; and one at least of the two Eastern Fathers, Ignatius, is singularly unlike his two brethren of the West. Ignatius was Bishop of the Christian Church at Antioch. Beyond this bare fact we know nothing of his life and work before the last journey to which his letters belong. We can see from the letters that he had been condemned to death as a Christian at Antioch and sent off under a guard of ten soldiers to suffer death at Rome. The course taken was, in part at least, through Asia Minor and then through Macedonia. Arrived at Smyrna, he was welcomed not only by the church of the city and its bishop Polycarp, but also by the delegates of the churches of three other cities lying along what we should now call the loop line of road which he had not traversed, and especially the church of the great capital, Ephesus. During this short stay at Smyrna he wrote three letters (which have been preserved) to these three churches which he had been obliged to pass unvisited, and a fourth of a different character to the Church of Rome, the goal of his journey, the place where he expected and desired to suffer martyrdom. We next find him at Alexandria Troas, the seaport from

which he was to sail for Europe. There he had the happiness of being overtaken by two deacons from the neighbourhood of his own Antioch, and receiving news of the cessation of the persecution which had caused his own condemnation. There also he wrote three more letters, to the Church of Smyrna which he had just left, to Polycarp its bishop, and to the Church of Philadelphia which he had been allowed to visit on his way to Smyrna. Thus the seven letters are made up, which are now in our hands. Of the European part of his course we have traces in Polycarp's Epistle, to which we shall come just now. The Church of Philippi received him warmly, and at his request sent a letter of greeting to the Church of Antioch through Polycarp, as he had asked those other churches to do to which he had written after receiving the good tidings from Syria. The Philippian Christians at the same time took the opportunity to ask Polycarp for copies of any letters of Ignatius in his possession. Of what followed we know nothing beyond the bare fact that Ignatius suffered martyrdom at Rome. Two different narratives exist professing to describe his martyrdom: but they are fabrications of late

date. It is morally certain that the manner of death would be by the fangs of wild beasts, and that the place of it would be the vast Flavian amphitheatre which for many centuries has been called the Colosseum. Any one who may have the good fortune to visit Rome and stand within the ruins of that wonderful pile will do well to think of Ignatius, and the testimony which he bore. The time of Ignatius' martyrdom is known on less clear evidence than could be wished. The probabilities however are in favour of about A.D. 110, the time fixed by Lightfoot in general terms.

We must now turn to the substance of the letters themselves. It is impossible not to shrink in some degree from any attempt to analyse them, as almost a cold-blooded thing to do. Nothing in early Christian literature is at all like them; nothing else has the same intensely personal character. It may be that their peculiarity is in part owing to difference of race: we seem to hear a Syrian speaking to us, not a Greek, much less a Roman, though Ignatius is a Roman name. But a strong personal individuality is there too. Utterly unlike as they likewise are in other ways to all the

apostolic Epistles, they have here and there a certain affinity of spirit to the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, the most individual of all St Paul's Epistles. The thought that underlies every word is the thought that the writer is a man sentenced to death, to death for the name of his Lord. The thought brings with it a sense of keen and yet utterly humble exultation. As he passes through the cities of Asia, his constant impulse is towards close fellowship between himself and the various churches in their midst, and again between these and his own church of Antioch. By word and by letter he is constantly striving to make them sharers in his own fervour of martyrdom, and to make himself a sharer in all that concerned their welfare.

Here and there we find warnings against doctrinal errors to the influence of which these Asiatic churches were exposed, apparently of two types only; one, the early form of what is commonly called Docetism, the tendency so to dwell on our Lord's Divine nature as to regard His body as a mere unreal appearance; the other the subordination of the Christian faith to Judaism, somewhat as in the days of St Paul. This latter evil was specially rife at Philadelphia,

where the Judaizers seem to have raised opposition against Ignatius himself as he passed through.

But a larger part of the letters is taken up with practical exhortations, especially to unity of spirit, unity of worship, unity of organisation. Even at this early time the churches evidently had many members who had become careless about Christian fellowship, and neglectful of the means by which alone it could be preserved in warmth and vigour. To take one significant example, it would seem that many of the Asiatic Christians had got into a habit of celebrating the Holy Communion in a loose and haphazard way, meeting together in little private knots of people, rather than in the central congregation as members of one great body. In this as in all matters Ignatius endeavoured to revive and strengthen internal and external fellowship by exhorting the members of the Church to gather dutifully round its duly appointed officers who were organised in a compact body of three orders, the bishop at the head, the presbytery or college of elders who formed his council, and the deacons or servants (*διάκονοι*) who were chiefly occupied in the

arrangements for the relief of the poorer members of the Church. Ignatius' language on these subjects, sometimes startling enough at best, becomes at least more intelligible when this practical purpose of his is remembered[1]. Having a keen sense of the immediate evil, he eagerly has recourse to that external remedy which lay immediately ready to his hand.

But it is poor work attempting to describe the words of a man like Ignatius. A few extracts will give a truer impression of him. We will begin with one of the elaborate salutations which head his letters, that to the Philadelphians.

"Ignatius, who is also Theophorus, to the church of God the Father and of Jesus Christ, which is in Philadelphia of Asia, which hath found mercy and is firmly established in the concord of God and rejoiceth in the passion of our Lord and in His resurrection without wavering, being fully assured in all mercy; which church I salute in the blood of Jesus Christ, that is eternal and abiding joy; more especially if they be at one with the bishop and the presbyters who are with him, and with the

[1] See Lightfoot, *Philippians*, pp. 234 foll. and elsewhere.

deacons that have been appointed according to the mind of Jesus Christ, whom after His own will He confirmed and established by His Holy Spirit[1]."

Writing to the Ephesians he says,

"I know who I am and to whom I write. I am a convict, ye have received mercy: I am in peril, ye are established. Ye are the high-road of those that are on their way to die unto God. Ye are associates in the mysteries with Paul, who was sanctified, who obtained a good report, who is worthy of all felicitation; in whose footsteps I would fain be found treading, when I shall attain unto God; who in every letter maketh mention of you in Christ Jesus.

"Do your diligence therefore to meet together more frequently for thanksgiving to God and for His glory. For when ye meet together frequently, the powers of Satan are cast down; and his mischief cometh to nought in the concord of your faith. There is nothing better than peace, in which all warfare of things in heaven and things on earth is abolished.

"None of these things is hidden from you, if

[1] Lightfoot, *Apostolic Fathers*, Part II., Vol. II., Sect. i., p. 559.

ye be perfect in your faith and love toward Jesus Christ, for these are the beginning and end of life—faith is the beginning and love is the end—and the two being found in unity are God, while all things else follow in their train unto true nobility. No man professing faith sinneth, and no man possessing love hateth. 'The tree is manifest from its fruit'; so they that profess to be Christ's shall be seen through their actions. For the Work is not a thing of profession now, but is seen then when one is found in the power of faith unto the end.

"It is better to keep silence and to be, than to talk and not to be. It is a fine thing to teach, if the speaker practise. Now there is one teacher, who 'spake and it came to pass': yea and even the things which He spake in silence are worthy of the Father. He that truly possesseth the word of Jesus, is able also to hearken unto His silence, that he may be perfect; that through his speech he may act and through his silence he may be known."[1]

And again a little earlier,

"And pray ye also without ceasing for the

[1] Lightfoot, *Apostolic Fathers*, Part II., Vol. II., Sect. i., p. 543.

rest of mankind (for there is in them a hope of repentance) that they may find God. Therefore permit them to take lessons at least from your works. Against their outbursts of wrath be ye meek; against their proud words be ye humble; against their railings set ye your prayers; against their errors be ye steadfast in the faith; against their fierceness be ye gentle. And be not zealous to imitate them by requital. Let us shew ourselves their brothers by our forbearance; but let us be zealous to be imitators of the Lord, vying with each other who shall suffer the greater wrong, who shall be defrauded, who shall be set at nought; that no herb of the devil be found in you: but in all purity and temperance abide ye in Christ Jesus, with your flesh and with your spirit."[1]

For a comprehensive passage on unity we may take this from the Epistle to the Magnesians.

"Seeing then that in the aforementioned persons I beheld your whole people in faith and embraced them, I advise you, be ye zealous to do all things in godly concord, the bishop

[1] Lightfoot, *Apostolic Fathers*, Part II., Vol. II., Sect. i., p. 542.

presiding after the likeness of God and the presbyters after the likeness of the council of the Apostles, with the deacons also who are most dear to me, having been entrusted with the diaconate of Jesus Christ, who was with the Father before the worlds and appeared at the end of time. Therefore do ye all study conformity to God and pay reverence one to another; and let no man regard his neighbour after the flesh, but love ye one another in Christ Jesus always. Let there be nothing among you which shall have power to divide you, but be ye united with the bishop and with them that preside over you as an ensample and a lesson of incorruptibility.

"Therefore as the Lord did nothing without the Father, [being united with Him], either by Himself or by the Apostles, so neither do ye anything without the bishop and the presbyters. And attempt not to think anything right for yourselves apart from others; but let there be one prayer in common, one supplication, one mind, one hope, in love and in joy unblameable, which is Jesus Christ, than whom there is nothing better. Hasten to come together all of you, as to one temple, even God; as to one altar, even

to one Jesus Christ, who came forth from One Father and is with One and departed unto One."[1]

These passages are from letters to churches, the six Asiatic churches to which he wrote. We may take also a few words from the beginning of his one letter to a single man, Polycarp the Bishop of Smyrna.

"Ignatius who is also Theophorus, unto Polycarp, who is bishop of the Church of the Smyrnæans, or rather whose Bishop is God the Father and Jesus Christ, abundant greeting.

"Welcoming thy godly mind which is grounded as it were on an immovable rock, I give exceeding glory that it hath been vouchsafed me to see thy blameless face, whereof I would fain have joy in God. I exhort thee in the grace wherewith thou art clothed to press forward in thy course and to exhort all men that they may be saved. Vindicate thine office in all diligence of flesh and of spirit. Have a care for union, than which there is nothing better. Bear all men, as the Lord also beareth thee. Suffer all men in love, as also thou doest. Give thyself

[1] Lightfoot, *Apostolic Fathers*, Part II., Vol. II., Sect. i., p. 547.

to unceasing prayers. Ask for larger wisdom than thou hast. Be watchful, and keep thy spirit from slumbering. Speak to each man severally after the manner of God. Bear the maladies of all, as a perfect athlete. Where there is much toil, there is much gain."[1]

I have kept till last the Epistle to the Romans, which is of different character from the rest. This was the church which was to receive him last; at Rome he was to die. To the Roman Christians he pours forth his inmost thoughts about his martyrdom. The exhortation which he has to address to them is chiefly that they will do nothing to hinder him in attaining this object of his desire. It is probable enough that among them were to be found persons of much influence with the emperor, who might thus have been able to save his life. But this is what he most anxiously deprecates. It must be confessed that much of the language here used about martyrdom is out of harmony with the teaching of the Lord and His Apostles. Taken up by men of a lower type of mind and character, it led but too naturally to the mere frensy of self-

[1] Lightfoot, *Apostolic Fathers*, Part II., Vol. II., Sect. i., p. 567.

destruction, under the name of martyrdom, against which some of the wiser Fathers had afterwards to protest. But reverence is due even to the extravagances of such a lofty soul as that of Ignatius.

"Ignatius, who is also Theophorus, unto her that hath found mercy in the bountifulness of the Father Most High and of Jesus Christ His only Son; to the Church that is beloved and enlightened through the will of Him who willed all things that are, by faith and love towards Jesus Christ our God; even unto her that hath the presidency in the country of the region of the Romans, being worthy of God, worthy of honour, worthy of felicitation, worthy of praise, worthy of success, worthy in purity, and having the presidency of love, walking in the law of Christ and bearing the Father's name; which Church also I salute in the name of Jesus Christ the Son of the Father; unto them that in flesh and spirit are united unto His every commandment, being filled with the grace of God without wavering, and filtered clear from every foreign stain; abundant greeting in Jesus Christ our God in blamelessness.

"Forasmuch as in answer to my prayer to

God it hath been granted to me to see your godly countenances, so that I have obtained even more than I asked; for wearing bonds in Christ Jesus I hope to salute you, if it be the Divine will that I should be counted worthy to reach unto the end; for the beginning verily is well ordered, if so be I shall attain unto the goal, that I may receive mine inheritance without hindrance. For I dread your very love, lest it do me an injury: for it is easy for you to do what ye will, but for me it is difficult to attain unto God, unless ye shall spare me.

"For I would not have you to be men pleasers but to please God, as indeed ye do please Him. For neither shall I myself ever find an opportunity such as this to attain unto God, nor can ye, if ye be silent, win the credit of any nobler work. For if ye be silent and leave me alone, I am a word of God; but if ye desire my flesh, then shall I be again a mere cry. Nay grant me nothing more than that I be poured out a libation to God, while there is still an altar ready; that forming yourselves into a chorus in love ye may sing to the Father in Jesus Christ, for that God hath vouchsafed that the bishop from Syria should be found in the West, having summoned him from

the East. It is good to set from the world unto God, that I may rise unto Him."

"I write to all the churches, and I bid all men know, that of my own free will I die for God, unless ye should hinder me. Let me be given to the wild beasts, for through them I can attain unto God. I am God's wheat, and I am ground by the teeth of wild beasts that I may be found pure bread [of Christ]. Rather entice the wild beasts, that they may become my sepulchre and may leave no part of my body behind, so that I may not, when I am fallen asleep, be burdensome to anyone. Then shall I be truly a disciple of Jesus Christ, when the world shall not so much as see my body. Supplicate the Lord for me, that through these instruments I may be found a sacrifice to God. I do not enjoin you, as Peter and Paul did. They were apostles, I am a convict; they were free, but I am a slave this very hour. Yet if I shall suffer, then am I a freedman of Jesus Christ, and I shall rise free in Him. Now I am learning in my bonds to put away every desire.

"Remember in your prayers the church which is in Syria, which hath God for its shepherd in my stead. Jesus Christ alone shall be

its bishop. He and your love. But for myself I am ashamed to be called one of them; for neither am I worthy, being the very last of them and an untimely birth: but I have found mercy that I should be some one, if so be I shall attain unto God. My spirit saluteth you, and the love of the churches which received me in the name of Jesus Christ, not as a mere wayfarer; for even those churches which did not lie on my route after the flesh went before me from city to city.

"Now I write these things unto you from Smyrna by the hand of the Ephesians who are worthy of all felicitation. And Crocus also, a name very dear to me, is with me, with many others besides."[1]

Polycarp, we have seen, was the chief person with whom Ignatius was brought in contact on his journey as a condemned prisoner through Asia Minor. There are other proper names in tolerable abundance in the Ignatian letters: but they belong to men now forgotten, and even in that day none of them can have had the prominence of Polycarp. His own one extant writing belongs to this very time: i.e. it was

[1] Lightfoot, *Apostolic Fathers*, Part II., Vol. II., Sect. i., pp. 555, foll.

written after Ignatius had not only left Asia Minor but Philippi also, but when as yet no tidings had come from Italy as to what had befallen him at Rome. This writing is a letter to the Philippians in answer to that which they had written on Ignatius' departure. To it were appended copies of the letters written by Ignatius to Smyrna and other churches, and these copies are probably the source of our present collection.

The letter itself has no such vivid personal interest as those of Ignatius. The good Polycarp was a much more commonplace person. But apart from its connexion with Ignatius, his letter has a great value of its own, partly as shewing what manner of thoughts on Christian faith and practice the bishop of a great Asiatic city cherished at that early date, partly also as shewing what writings of the Apostles he possessed and revered and drew upon (and that copiously) to give point and authority to what he had to say. The letter is for the most part made up of brotherly admonition, partly to the Philippian church at large, partly to its deacons, partly to its elders. There is no mention of any bishop, any more than there is in Ignatius' epistle to the Romans. Apparently this

concentration of church government had not yet at this time spread from Asia into Europe. We may take a short chapter from near the beginning (after the Salutation), and another from near the end.

"I rejoiced with you greatly in our Lord Jesus Christ, for that ye received the followers of the true love and escorted them on their way, as befitted you—those men encircled in saintly bonds which are the diadems of them that be truly chosen of God and our Lord; and that the stedfast root of your faith which was famed from primitive times abideth until now and beareth fruit unto our Lord Jesus Christ, who endured to face even death for our sins, 'whom God raised, having loosed the pangs of Hades; on whom, though ye saw Him not, ye believe with joy unutterable and full of glory'; unto which joy many desire to enter in; forasmuch as ye know that it is 'by grace ye are saved, not of works,' but by the will of God through Jesus Christ."[1]

"For I am persuaded that ye are well trained in the sacred writings, and nothing

[1] Lightfoot, *Apostolic Fathers*, Part II., Vol. II., Sect. ii., p. 1051.

is hidden from you. But to myself this is not granted. Only, as it is said in the scriptures, 'Be ye angry and sin not' and 'Let not the sun set on your wrath.' Blessed is he that remembereth this; and I trust that this is in you. Now may the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the eternal High Priest Himself, the God Jesus Christ, build you up in faith and truth, and in all gentleness and in all avoidance of wrath and in forbearance and long suffering and in patient endurance and purity; and may He grant unto you a lot and portion among His saints, and to us with you, and to all that are under heaven, who shall believe on our Lord and God Jesus Christ and on His Father 'that raised Him from the dead. Pray for all the saints.' Pray also 'for kings and powers and princes,' and 'for them that persecute' and hate 'you,' and for 'the enemies of the cross,' that your fruit may be 'manifest among all men,' that ye may be perfect in Him."[1]

This meeting with Ignatius must have come somewhere towards the middle of Polycarp's

[1] Lightfoot, *Apostolic Fathers*, Part II., Vol. II., Sect. ii., p. 1055.

long life. His importance for us depends in no small degree on that longevity of his. As Dr Lightfoot has expounded with peculiar force, he bridges the long and comparatively obscure period between the close of the apostolic age and the great writers of the latter part of the second century. Born somewhere about the time of the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, he lived in early life near St John and it may be one or two more of the Twelve. Of this converse in early youth he used to rejoice to tell in his later years. This we learn from a striking passage from a letter of Irenæus which has happily been preserved. "I can tell" he wrote, "the very place in which the blessed Paul used to sit when he discoursed, and his goings out and his comings in, and the stamp of his life, and his bodily appearance, and the discourses which he held towards the congregation, and how he would describe his intercourse with John and with the rest of those who had seen the Lord, and how he would relate their words. And whatsoever things he had heard from them about the Lord and about His acts of power and about His teaching, Polycarp, as having received them from eye-

witnesses of the life and Word would relate altogether in accordance with the Scriptures."[1]

But from that midpoint of Polycarp's life formed by the passing of Ignatius we are able not only to look back to his youth but also forward to his extreme old age. Somewhere about the middle of the second century he made a journey to Rome to take counsel with Anicetus the Bishop (for by that time episcopacy was regularly established at Rome) about various matters of Church usage, but especially about the time of celebrating the Paschal festival, as to which the Churches of Asia Minor differed from those of the West. They remained in perfect amity, though the differences of usage continued, and Anicetus paid Polycarp the honour of setting him in his own place to preside over the Eucharistic service at Rome. Not long after the old man's return, something like forty-five years after Ignatius' death for conscience sake, he too in his turn was called to give his life in bearing witness to the truth. A probably genuine narrative of his martyrdom still survives, being a letter from the Church of Smyrna to one or more Churches in Phrygia.

[1] Lightfoot, i. 429. Eusebius, v. 20.

Every one, I suppose, has somewhere or other read the answer which he is recorded to have made when the magistrate, anxious to spare him, besought him to revile the Christ, and so obtain release. "Fourscore and six years have I been his servant; and how can I blaspheme my King that saved me?" Let us read also his last words when he had been tied to the stake, true last words of a true Father of the Church.

"So they did not nail him, but tied him. Then he, placing his hands behind him, and being bound to the stake, like a noble ram out of a great flock for an offering, a burnt sacrifice made ready and acceptable to God, looking up to heaven said; 'O Lord God Almighty, the Father of Thy beloved and blessed Son Jesus Christ, through whom we have received the knowledge of Thee, the God of angels and powers and of all creation and of the whole race of the righteous, who live in Thy presence; I bless Thee for that Thou hast granted me this day and hour, that I might receive a portion amongst the number of martyrs in the cup of [Thy] Christ unto resurrection of eternal life, both of soul and body, in the incorrupti-

bility of the Holy Spirit. May I be received among these in Thy presence this day, as a rich and acceptable sacrifice, as Thou didst prepare and reveal it beforehand, and hast accomplished it, Thou that art the faithful and true God. For this cause, yea and for all things, I praise Thee, I bless Thee, I glorify Thee, through the eternal and heavenly High-priest, Thy beloved Son, through whom with Him and the Holy Spirit be glory both now [and ever] and for the ages to come. Amen.'"[1]

[1] Lightfoot, *Apostolic Fathers*, Part II., Vol. II., Sect. ii., p. 1064.

LECTURE III.

JUSTIN AND IRENÆUS.

LAST week we finished those of the Fathers who are called Apostolic Fathers. We considered two of them who were also martyrs, though at a long interval of time, one a Bishop of Antioch who was conducted through Asia Minor to perish by the fangs of wild beasts at Rome, the other a Bishop of Smyrna who welcomed him on his way to death, collected his letters and wrote about him at the time, journeyed himself in extreme old age from Asia Minor to Rome to confer about difference of Church usages, came peacefully home, and then before long was himself called to perish at the stake in his own Smyrna because he too would not deny his Lord.

We come to-day to a third martyr, one who conventionally bears the title of martyr almost

as if it were part of his name. Justin was born at Flavia Neapolis close to Sychem in Samaria, but, it would seem, of heathen parentage. His Dialogue, to which we shall come presently, is represented as having had its scene laid at Ephesus. Eventually Justin would seem to have been much at Rome, at that time a special place of resort for those who took an active part in religious movements: and there he suffered martyrdom.

The genuine works of his which have come down to us in their original form are at most three in number, without counting a little treatise against heresies, lost in its original form, but apparently in great part copied by Irenæus. Several others bear his name in manuscripts, but are certainly by other authors of various ages, some quite late. Early in the fourth century his name was attached to a partially different list of writings, the genuineness of which we have no means of testing. But the books of his which we do possess are so valuable from several points of view that we have every reason to be satisfied. They are two Apologies, as they are called, defending Christians against heathen misrepresentations and heathen perse-

cutions; and a Dialogue with a Jew named Trypho in which the faith of Christians is vindicated against Judaism. It is hardly necessary to say that Justin's Apologies have nothing whatever to do with courteous excuses, i.e. with the modern English sense of the word 'apology.' It is simply the common Greek word to denote any kind of defence against any kind of accusation, in a court of justice or anywhere else. Justin's Apologies were not quite the earliest of which we have any knowledge; but, so far as we do know, their predecessors were of less permanent value.

Justin's first and longest Apology is addressed to the Roman Emperor, i.e. Antoninus Pius, and his two adopted sons, one of them the philosopher Marcus Aurelius, to the Sacred Senate and all the people of the Romans. The time is two or three years before the middle of the second century. Justin writes, he says, on behalf of them who out of every race of mankind are the subjects of unjust hate and contumely, being himself one of them. He begins by appealing to the names *Pious* and *Philosopher* borne by the rulers. "Reason," he says, "instructs those who are truly Pious and Philo-

sophers to honour and cherish that only which is true, refusing to follow mere opinions of the ancients if they are bad ones: for sober reason instructs us not only not to follow those actions or decisions which have been unjust, but the lover of truth is bound in every way, and with disregard of his own life, to choose to say and do such things as are just, though he be threatened with death for so doing." He protests against condemnation of Christians for the mere name, without anything evil being proved against them. He repudiates the vulgar imputation of atheism, pointing out how the same charge had been brought against Socrates, and had caused his death. That crime he attributes to the inspiration of the demons, whom he identifies with the gods of the heathen, and whom he represents as similarly inspiring the attacks upon Christians. As regards such gods as these, he confesses atheism, but not as regards the most true God, the Father of right, and temperance and the other virtues, Himself free from all mixture of evil; and His Son and the prophetic Spirit. As regards the lives of Christians, he courts the fullest enquiry, demanding that any found guilty of misconduct

be duly punished, but for his crimes, not for being a Christian. Then follow several chapters on the true service of God, on the Divine kingdom for which Christians look, and on their living as ever in God's sight; and this is followed by free quotation from the Sermon on the Mount, and other similar passages from Gospel records; and by reference to Christ's own authority for the faithful loyalty which Christians practised towards the emperors. But it would take far too long to give even a slight sketch of the contents of the Apology. At every step we find attempts to trace analogies between Christian beliefs on the one hand and Greek philosophy or Greek mythology on the other. This was no mere diplomatic *ad hominem* accommodation, but connected with Justin's own deepest convictions. The doctrine of the Divine Word or λόγος received from Scripture he connected with the Stoic doctrine of the Word or Reason (λόγος) a seed of which is inborn in all men; and thus he was enabled to recognise the workings of God in the ages before the Word became Incarnate. He also appeals largely to the testimony of the Jewish prophets; but on this subject he is hampered by his habit of

looking chiefly to supposed literal fulfilments of verbal predictions and by a want of perception of the true nature of prophecy. The last few chapters contain a valuable account of baptism as then practised (i.e. adult baptism, for nothing is said of infant baptism), and then of the conducting of the newly-baptised person to the assembly of "the brethren," followed by the offering up of prayers for him and "for all others everywhere," and by the joining of all in the feast of thanksgiving or Eucharist, of which he gives a further explanation. "And we from that time forward," he proceeds, "always have each other in remembrance; and we that are wealthy give help to all that are in need, and we are in company with each other always. And for all that we partake of we bless the Maker of all things through his Son Jesus Christ and through the Holy Spirit." Last he describes the Sunday service including the Eucharist, and the distribution of the offerings among orphans and widows, the sick and the needy, prisoners and sojourners from other lands.

The second or Shorter Apology is probably a sort of Appendix to the first. It begins with a

complaint how Urbicus the city prefect (or mayor, as we should say) had condemned three Christians in succession to death, without any crime on their part. Justin declares that he too is expecting a similar fate, perhaps by the false accusations of the Cynic Crescens who went about declaiming against the Christians. In what follows Justin speaks still more explicitly than before of the seed of the Word which had been implanted in the wiser and better heathen, causing them to be persecuted, not Socrates only but Musonius and other Stoics: but they all differed, he explains, from Christ, because what with them was in part only was with Him complete and whole. "Whatsoever things therefore," he says, "have been said well in any men's words belong to us Christians: for we worship and love next to God the Word who cometh forth from the unborn and unutterable God, since for our sakes also He hath become man, that becoming also a partaker of the things that affect us He might also accomplish for us a cure. For all those writers were able to see but dimly through the seed of the Word inborn in them the things that are. For a seed of a thing and imitation of it granted according to capacity

is one thing, and quite other is that which graciously gives itself to be imparted and imitated."

The other work of Justin, a much larger one, is the Dialogue with Trypho:

"While I was walking one morning in the walks of the Xystus, a certain man, with others in his company, having met me, said, 'Hail, O philosopher!' And immediately after saying this, he turned round and walked along with me; his friends likewise turned round with him. And I for my part addressed him, saying, 'Well, what is it?' And he replied, 'I was taught,' says he, 'by Corinthus the Socratic in Argos, that I ought not to despise or neglect those who wear this dress, but to shew them all kindness, and to associate with them, if so be some advantage might arise from the intercourse either to some such man or to myself. It is good, moreover, for both, if either the one or the other be benefited. On this account, therefore, whenever I see anyone in such dress, I gladly approach him, and now, for the same reason, have I willingly accosted you; and these accompany me, in the expectation of hearing for themselves something profitable from you.'

'But who are you, best of mortals?' So I replied to him in jest.

Then he told me simply both his name and his race. 'Trypho,' says he, 'I am called; and I am a Hebrew of the circumcision, escaped from the war lately carried on there, and now spending my days in Greece, for the most part at Corinth.'

'And in what' said I, 'would you be profited by philosophers so much as by your own lawgiver and the prophets?'

'What?' he replied. 'Do not the philosophers make their whole discourse on God? and are they not continually raising questions about His unity and providence? Is not this truly the duty of philosophy, to investigate concerning the Divinity?'

'Yes,' said I, 'so we too have supposed. But the most have not even cared about this, whether there be one or more gods, and whether they take thought for each one of us or no, as if this knowledge contributed nothing to our happiness; nay, they moreover attempt to persuade us that God takes care of the universe as a whole with its genera and species, but not of me and you, and each individually, since other-

wise we would surely not need to pray to Him night and day. But it is not difficult to understand the upshot of this; for fearlessness and licence in speaking result to such as maintain these opinions, doing and saying whatever they choose, neither dreading punishment nor hoping for any benefit from God. For how could they? They affirm that the same things shall always happen; and, further, that I and you shall again live in like manner, having become neither better men nor worse. But there are some others, who, having supposed the soul to be immortal and immaterial, believe that though they have committed evil they will not suffer punishment (for that which is immaterial is insensible), and that the soul, in consequence of its immortality, needs nothing from God.'

And he, smiling gently, said, 'Tell us your opinion of these matters, and what idea you entertain respecting God, and what your philosophy is.'

'I will tell you,' said I, 'what seems to me; for philosophy is in fact the greatest possession, and most honourable before God, to whom it leads us and alone commends us; and these are truly holy men who have bestowed atten-

tion on philosophy. What philosophy is, however, and the reason why it has been sent down to men, have escaped the observation of most; for there would be neither Platonists, nor Stoics, nor Peripatetics, nor Theoretics, nor Pythagoreans, this knowledge being one. I wish to tell you how it has become many-headed. It has happened that those who first handled it [i.e. philosophy], and who were therefore esteemed illustrious men, were succeeded by those who made no investigations concerning truth, but only admired the perseverance and self-discipline of the former, as well as the novelty of the doctrines; and each thought that to be true which he learned from his teacher: then, moreover, those latter persons handed down to their successors such things, and others similar to them; and this system was called by the name of him who was styled the father of the doctrine. Being at first desirous of personally conversing with one of these men, I surrendered myself to a certain Stoic; and having spent a considerable time with him, when I had not acquired any further knowledge of God (for he did not know himself nor did he say that this was a necessary part of teaching) I left him, and be-

took myself to another, who was called a Peripatetic, and as he fancied, shrewd. And this man, after putting up with me for the first few days, requested me to fix a fee, in order that the intercourse might not be unprofitable to us. Him too for this reason I abandoned, believing him to be no philosopher at all. But as my soul was still yearning to hear the peculiar and choice part of philosophy, I came to a Pythagorean, very celebrated—a man who thought much of his own wisdom. And then, when I had an interview with him, willing to become his hearer and disciple, he said, "What then? Are you acquainted with music, astronomy and geometry? Do you expect to perceive any of those things which conduce to a happy life, if you have not been first informed on those points which wean the soul from sensible objects, and render it fitted for objects which appertain to the mind, so that it can contemplate that which is honourable in its essence and that which is good in its essence?" Having commended many of these branches of learning, and telling me that they were necessary, he dismissed me when I confessed to him my ignorance. Accordingly I took it rather

impatiently, as was to be expected when I failed in my hope, the more so because I deemed the man had some knowledge; but reflecting again on the space of time during which I would have to linger over those branches of learning, I was not able to endure longer procrastination. In my perplexity it occurred to me to have an interview with the Platonists likewise, for their fame was great. And so I conversed much with one who had lately settled in our city—a man of intelligence, holding a high position among the Platonists—and I made progress, and gained ever so much increase day by day. And the perception of immaterial things quite overpowered me, and the contemplation of ideas furnished my mind with wings, so that in a little while I supposed that I had become wise; and such was my stupidity, I expected forthwith to look upon God, for this is the end of Plato's philosophy.

'And while I was thus disposed, when I wished at one time to be filled with great quietness, and to shun the tramp of men, I used to go to a certain field not far from the sea. And when I was near that spot one day, which having reached I purposed to be by myself, a

certain old man, by no means contemptible in appearance, shewing a meek and grave disposition, followed me at a little distance. And when I turned round to him, having halted, I fixed my eyes rather keenly on him.'"—

Then Justin recounts how the old man, after much discourse on philosophy, and especially that of Plato and Pythagoras, guided him to the prophets and the Christ of whom they prophesied.

"'But pray' he concluded 'that before all things, the gates of light may be opened to thee; for these things are not perceptible to the eyes or mind of all, but only of the man to whom God and His Christ shall give the power to understand.'

'When he had spoken these and many other things, which there is no time for mentioning at present, he went away, bidding me follow them up; and I saw him no more. But straightway a fire was kindled in my soul; and a love of the prophets, and of those men who are friends of Christ, possessed me; and whilst revolving his words in my mind, I found this philosophy alone to be safe and expedient. Thus, then, and for this reason, I am a philosopher. More-

over, I would wish that all with a resolution similar to my own would never separate themselves from the words of the Saviour. For they possess an awe in themselves, and are sufficient to abash those who turn aside from the path of rectitude; while the sweetest rest comes to those who carefully practise them. If then, thou hast any care for thyself, and seekest after salvation and puttest thy trust in God, thou mayest come to know the Christ of God, and become perfect, and so be happy.'

When I had said this, my beloved friend, those who were with Trypho laughed; but he, smiling, says, 'I approve of your other remarks, and admire the eagerness with which you study divine things; but it were better for you still to abide in the philosophy of Plato, or of some other man, cultivating endurance, self-control, and moderation, rather than be deceived by false words, and follow the opinions of men of no reputation. For if you remain in that mode of philosophy, and live blamelessly, a hope of a better destiny were left to you; but when you have forsaken God, and reposed confidence in man, what safety still awaits you? If, then, thou art willing to listen to me (for I have

already considered you a friend), first be circumcised, then keep as the law hath ordained the Sabbath, and the feasts, and the new moons of God; and, in a word, do all things which have been written in the law: and then perhaps thou shalt have mercy from God. But Christ—if He has indeed been born, and exists anywhere—is unknown, and does not yet even recognise Himself, and has no power until Elias come to anoint Him, and make Him manifest to all. But ye, accepting a vain report, invent a Christ for yourselves, and for His sake are now inconsiderately perishing.'

'I excuse and forgive you, my friend,' I said 'for you know not what you say, but have been persuaded by teachers who do not understand the Scriptures; and you speak, like a diviner, whatever comes into your mind. But if you are willing to listen to an account of Him, how we have not been deceived, and shall not cease to confess Him—although men's reproaches be heaped upon us, although the most terrible tyrant compel us to deny Him,—I shall prove to you as you stand here that we have not believed empty fables, or words without any foundation, but words filled with the

Spirit of God, and big with power, and flourishing with grace[1].'"

Some of Trypho's companions depart with jeers, and then the dialogue begins in earnest. It ranges over the various points of difference between Judaism and the Christian faith of that time, and large masses of the Old Testament are naturally quoted and discussed. But we must be content with the autobiographic sketch, for such it doubtless is, which forms the introduction. Of course we must not expect that that story of passing from philosopher to philosopher is a *complete* account of the course of Justin's conversion. In his second Apology he speaks strongly of the impression made on him by the virtues of the Christians while he was in his Platonist stage, and we may be sure that this impression acted powerfully on him. But the name which he commonly bore, Justin *philosopher* and martyr, was entirely appropriate. He is the first prominent representative of what was to be the characteristic of many Fathers of the Church both Greek and Latin, the construction of a theology out of the biblical elements of

[1] Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho*, from pp. 85—97 in Rev. G. Reith's translation (Antenicene Christian Library).

the faith in combination with this or that Gentile philosophy of the loftier sort.

How soon Justin's anticipations of martyrdom were fulfilled is not known with certainty. There is fair evidence however that the interval was not long. A short and simple narrative of his examination before the prefect still survives, and is almost certainly genuine. He and his companions died by the headsman's sword.

We possess other Greek Apologies written later in the same century. The most individual of them is by Tatian, an erratic disciple of Justin's, the compiler of a famous Diatessaron or composite Gospel narrative formed by putting together small fragments of the four Gospels. He was by birth a Syrian, not a Greek, and his fiery nature bursts forth in his Apology in bitter hatred and contempt for all that was Greek. The other Apologies have a value of their own, but are far below Justin's in force and freshness.

We must now turn to a different region from any in which we have as yet paused. Irenæus, one of the greatest of the Fathers, belongs to different countries; but he must always be chiefly associated with South-East France, the scene of his principal labours and episcopal

authority. There is however a prelude to his work which must not be passed over. Marseilles was a Greek colony of great antiquity; and from it the Greek language and culture spread not only along the coast but for a considerable distance up the Rhone. How the Gospel first found its way there we do not know: but there is some evidence of a connexion between the churches of Western Asia Minor and those of the Rhone. Now the historian Eusebius has preserved for us the greater part of a letter which begins thus:

"The servants of Christ who sojourn in Vienne and Lyons in Gaul to the brethren throughout Asia and Phrygia who have the same faith and hope of redemption with us: peace and grace and glory from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord." The purpose of the letter is to describe a grievous persecution which had fallen upon them, Pothinus the bishop, a man of 90 years of age, being among the victims. The story of Christian heroism, especially as shewn by the slave girl Blandina, has hardly an equal in literature: but it must be read as a whole, and it is of considerable length.

While some of these Christians of Lyons and

Vienne were in prison, they wrote various letters, among others one to Eleutherus, Bishop of Rome, "on behalf of the peace of the churches," i.e. probably to urge toleration for the votaries of the new enthusiastic movement proceeding from Phrygia which we know under the name Montanism. The bearer of the letter was an elder of Lyons, Irenæus by name; and the writers of the letter warmly commend him to Eleutherus, as one who was zealous for the covenant of Christ. How long he had been in Gaul, we know not; but he came from Asia Minor, where as we know from the passage read last week he had listened eagerly to the aged Polycarp, and his reminiscences of his intercourse in youth with men who had seen the Lord. There is also some evidence that he was at Rome at the time of Polycarp's death, and heard there the sound as of a trumpet proclaiming "Polycarp hath suffered martyrdom." Later in life he addressed himself to Rome for another mission of peace. The importance which the Church of Rome derived from its position in the central city of the Empire was gradually fastening itself to the person of its bishop, and assumed exaggerated proportions when the

arrogant Victor was its bishop. The differences between the Asiatic and the Roman customs as to the time of keeping the Paschal festival had now become aggravated into a deadly strife, and Victor endeavoured to impose the Roman custom on all churches. Irenæus was now a follower of the Roman custom: but this did not prevent his writing a strong letter of remonstrance to Victor in the name of the Christians of Gaul. This incident occurred somewhere in the last few years of the second century. After this we hear no more of Irenæus on any tolerable authority. He may or may not have lived into the new century. Essentially he is the best representative of the last half, and especially the last quarter, of the second century.

Besides minor works, chiefly Epistles, of which we have only fragments, we possess entire Irenæus' great work, the Refutation and Overthrow of the Knowledge (Gnosis) falsely so called. Only a small proportion of it is preserved in Greek: but it is a great thing that the ancient Latin version is completely preserved. Thus far I have said nothing about the theologians who are now called Gnostics. Unfortu-

nately not many fragments are preserved of their own writings; so that our knowledge of them comes chiefly from opponents who saw truly the impossibility of reconciling their main principles with the historical Gospel, but who as a rule had but a dim sense of the real meaning of their speculations, and a very imperfect sympathy with the speculative difficulties which led to them. The so-called Gnostic systems were various attempts to interpret history and nature by a medley of Christian ideas with the ideas and mythologies suggested by various Eastern religions. The most definite types of so-called Gnosticism were further shaped by Greek influence, and it is in this form that they chiefly came into collision with the ordinary churches. Their great time was about the middle of the first half of the second century: but they lasted on in one shape or another for a considerable time. The great leaders had passed away before Irenæus wrote: but even in Gaul his flock was troubled by some of the successors; and it was no superfluous task that he undertook when he set about an elaborate refutation. Doubtless he had other predecessors besides Justin. Thus Papias had written "Expositions

of the Lord's Oracles" to correct and supersede the fantastic interpretation of our Lord's parables and other discourses by which some of the so-called Gnostics endeavoured to find authority for their speculations. Nor was he the only 'elder,' to use the often recurring title, whom Irenæus was thankful to quote and sometimes to transcribe at considerable length. Doubtless, if so large a proportion of the Christian literature of the preceding half-century had not perished, we should have found yet clearer evidence of the width of his reading.

But it is a striking fact that, while his censure of the so-called Gnostic systems is always unreserved and pitiless, he is unconsciously influenced by the new thoughts which they had brought forward. The Christianity which he proclaims has a comprehensiveness such as no earlier Christian Father known to us could ever have dreamed of. His doctrine of the Word is a true expansion of St John's doctrine, a rich application of it to bring order into the retrospect of the spiritual history of mankind: and so his vision of the future is inspired by the thought which he loves to repeat out of the Epistle to the Ephesians, how that it was the

eternal purpose of the Father to sum up all things in Christ (*ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι*, *recapitulare*).

Two passages must suffice, though many are tempting to read. The first shall be a familiar one from the second book, on our Lord's taking upon Him all the ages of man up to adult manhood.

"He was thirty years of age when He came to the Baptism, thenceforth having the full age of a teacher, when He came to Jerusalem, that He might rightly be able to receive the title of Teacher from all. For to seem one thing, and *be* another, was not His way, as is said by those who represent Him as being in appearance only: but what He was, that He also seemed. Being therefore a Teacher, He had likewise the ages of a Teacher, not rejecting nor transcending man, nor breaking the law of the human race in Himself, but hallowing every age by its likeness to Himself. For He came to save all through Himself; all, I mean, who through Him are born anew unto God, infants, and little children, and boys, and youths, and elders. Accordingly He came through every age, with infants becoming an infant, hallowing infants; among

little children a little child, hallowing those of that very age, at the same time making Himself to them an example of dutifulness, and righteousness, and subjection; among young men a young man, becoming an example to young men and hallowing them to the Lord. So also an elder among elders, that He might be a perfect Teacher in all things, not only as regards the setting forth of the Truth but also as regards age, at the same time hallowing also the elders, becoming likewise an example to them. Lastly He came also even unto death, that He might be the first begotten from the dead, Himself holding the primacy in all things, the Author of life, before all things, and having precedence of all things[1]."

The other passage shall be from the end of the book, the end also of the millennial speculations which filled Irenæus as they did other men of that age. If some of the thoughts are difficult to follow, yet they manifestly deserve to be listened to and pondered.

"In clear vision then did John see beforehand the first resurrection of the righteous, and the inheritance of the earth during the kingdom

[1] Irenæus, p. 358, Stieren.

(reign): to the same effect also did the prophets prophesy concerning it. For thus much the Lord also taught, in that He promised that He would have a new mixing of the Cup in the kingdom with the disciples. And the apostle too declared that the creation should be free from the bondage of corruption to enter the liberty of the glory of the sons of God. And in all these [events], and through them all, the same God, even the Father, is shewn forth, who fashioned man, and promised the inheritance to the fathers, who prepared it [?] for the resurrection of the righteous, and fulfils the promises for His Son's kingdom, afterward bestowing as a Father things which neither eye hath seen, nor ear heard, and which have not ascended into the heart of man. For One is the Son, who accomplished the Father's will; and one the human race, in which the mysteries of God are accomplished, which angels desire to see, and have not power to explain the wisdom of God, through which the being which He fashioned is brought into conformity and concorporation with the Son; that His offspring, the first begotten Word, might descend into the creature, that is into the being that [God] fashioned, and be received by

Him ; and that the creature again might receive the Word, and ascend up to Him, mounting above the angels, and come to be after the image and likeness of God."

LECTURE IV.

HIPPOLYTUS AND CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA.

In Justin the Samaritan, who taught and who died a martyr's death at Rome, we have had before us the most characteristic of the Greek apologists of the second century, a man who went about clad only in the traditional philosopher's cloak, and who pleaded the cause of the Christians against the assaults of magistrates and populace on the ground that their faith and conduct should commend itself to philosophers and lovers of right reason.

In Irenæus, the disciple of Polycarp at Smyrna, who became bishop of Lyons and took an active part in promoting the peace of the Church when endangered by the intolerance of Victor, Bishop of Rome, we have had the first great theologian, in the strict sense of the

word, whose writings are to any great extent preserved to us. His great refutation of the leading doctrines of the teachers called Gnostics, is a still imperfectly worked mine of great thoughts on God's dealings with mankind through the ages, founded on the idea of the Word before and after the Incarnation.

A few words are due to a disciple of Irenæus, who forty years ago would have been commonly reckoned an obscure and unimportant Father, viz. Hippolytus. Shortly after that date there was published from a manuscript then lately brought to Paris an elaborate Greek account and refutation of early heresies, chiefly 'Gnostic,' which it was soon recognised could not well have any other author than Hippolytus. There is no real doubt about the matter, though, for quite intelligible reasons, a few still hold otherwise. The author writes as a bishop, and Hippolytus is sometimes called Bishop of Rome, sometimes bishop of Portus, the commercial port of Rome. What he really was, is still an open question. The most commonly received view is that which was suggested by Döllinger, that for at least a certain time Callistus and Hippolytus were respectively recognised by different parties in

the Roman Church as each the only true and lawful Bishop of Rome, though eventually Callistus alone was officially acknowledged as having been bishop. The treatise itself is one of much value for the extracts which it gives from Gnostical writings. But of more general interest is the narrative of some of the inner history of the Roman Church under two successive bishops. After every allowance has been made for the partisanship of the writer, the picture is not an agreeable one. But this lies outside our proper subject. Of the part taken by Hippolytus it is enough to say that he regarded Callistus and the dominant authorities of the Roman Church as dangerously lax in their admission of penitents to communion, and he likewise accused them of favouring a doctrine not far from Sabellianism, while he himself, from the manner in which he expounded the doctrine of the Word, a doctrine which evidently had little meaning for them, was accused by them of setting up two Gods to be worshipped. The end of the story seems to be supplied by a curious early Roman record which states that "Pontianus the bishop" (the second after Callistus) and "Hippolytus the presbyter were banished to Sardinia, to the

island of deadly climate." Perhaps, as has been suggested, the Roman magistrates took this way of enforcing peace in the Christian community, by getting rid of the two leaders together. From another record forming part of the same document we learn that the Roman Church in the middle of the fourth century kept on the same day the festival of Hippolytus in one cemetery and of Pontianus in another, both evidently as martyrs. Apparently they had both perished in the mines of Sardinia, and their bodies been received back in peace together. According to a somewhat confused tradition Hippolytus before his death had advised his followers to return to the communion of the Roman Church authorities. In the fourth and later centuries the strangest and most contradictory legends of his martyrdom became current. By a singular good fortune a contemporary memorial of him has been preserved, such as we possess for no other early Father whatever. Above three centuries ago a large part of an ancient sitting statue was dug up near Rome, and in due time recognised by the very interesting inscriptions on the base to have been no other than Hippolytus, though his name does not appear, and to have been erected

shortly after his death. In the great hall of the Christian Museum at St John Lateran, as you walk up between two lines of early Christian sarcophagi of the highest interest for their carving, you are faced by this great statue of Hippolytus looking down upon you from the platform at the end.

Hippolytus was one of the three most learned Greek Fathers of his time, mostly the early part of the third century. Of one of them Julius Africanus, of whom only fragments remain, I propose to say no more. To Origen we shall come presently. Hippolytus' writings chiefly fall under two heads, doctrinal treatises of a controversial kind, and books connected with the study of Scripture, either actual commentaries or essays at constructing some sort of Scripture chronology. His defence of the Gospel and Apocalypse of St John against certain contemporary gainsayers might be reckoned under either head. He was especially interested in the books of Daniel and Revelation, and in some of the questions which they suggest. To him they were by no means questions of idle curiosity; for in the new hostility of the Roman state, as shewn in the persecution of Septimius Severus,

he supposed that he saw a fulfilment of Apocalyptic prophecy. All that remains of him however, with the exception of the great treatise on heresies, itself far from complete, makes up only a small volume. This is the more remarkable as the fame of his writings spread far and wide through the East, though the story of his life was unknown outside Rome or else forgotten.

Hippolytus, following Irenæus, has conducted us well into the third century. We must now go back half a generation or so to make acquaintance with a different region and a different way of apprehending Christianity and its relation to the world, though no doubt to a certain extent anticipated by Justin Martyr. Alexandria at the mouth of the Nile had long been a special home of Greek learning and philosophy, a place where the culture of Egypt, Asia, and Europe met together. But of still greater moment was the nature of the Judaism which had arisen in the midst of the vast Jewish population of the city, a Judaism almost wholly detached from the legal influences which dominated the Judaism of Palestine, and aiming especially at the comparison and harmonising of the Old Testament, and

specially the Pentateuch, with the better forms of Greek philosophy. Of this Græcised Judaism we have invaluable examples in Philo's writings. We know almost nothing of Alexandrian Christianity in its earlier days: but evidently it took its shape in no small degree from the type of Judaism which was already current in the place.

In the middle part of the second century we hear of a Christian Catechetical school at Alexandria, probably for the instruction of the highly educated converts who joined the Church. The second name preserved to us from the list of its heads or chief instructors is that of the Sicilian Pantænus, best remembered now as having gone on a missionary journey to India. Among his pupils was Clement of Alexandria, the Father who next claims our attention, and who often speaks of him, chiefly only under the title 'the elder,' with enthusiastic affection. Clement himself is said to have been an Athenian and probably was so. Profoundly Christian as he is, there is no Father who shews anything like the same familiarity with the ancient classical literature of Greece, especially the poetical literature. It is not clear whether he was of Christian or of

heathen parents: but we know from himself that he travelled in early life, and came under the influence of at least six different Christian teachers in different lands, whom he calls "blessed and truly memorable men." In Greece he met the first, an Ionian, i.e. probably from Western Asia Minor: two others in Magna Græcia, the Greek-speaking South part of Italy, one from Middle Syria and another from Egypt. Whether he went to Rome, as one would expect, does not appear: at all events he refers to no teacher met there. From Italy he crossed to the East, and there he learned from an Assyrian, supposed to be Justin's scholar Tatian, and from another, in Palestine, one of Jewish birth. The last, he says, in order, but virtually the first, he found lurking in Egypt, and there he rested. He had found Pantænus. There is reason to suppose that after a time he became a colleague of Pantænus in the Catechetical school, and at all events when Pantænus died he succeeded him, probably somewhere about the year 200. He was now or soon after a presbyter of the Church. But two or three years later through a change in the policy of the Emperor Septimius Severus a persecution

broke out, which fell with much severity on Alexandria; and the teachers of the Catechetical school, evidently including Clement, took refuge elsewhere. A few years after this we have a glimpse of him through a scrap of a letter of his pupil Alexander, fortunately preserved by Eusebius. Alexander was at this time apparently bishop of a Cappadocian church; certainly he was in prison for conscience sake; and he wrote a congratulatory letter out of his prison on their recent choice of a new bishop, sending it by Clement whom he calls "the blessed presbyter, a man virtuous and well tried": who by the Providence of God was then with him and had stablished and increased the Church. Clement cannot have lived much longer. In another letter to Origen, written before 216, Alexander again speaks affectionately of Clement as of Pantænus, both as now departed. These testimonies are of value as shewing that Clement's withdrawal from the approaching persecution was due to no selfish cowardice, but to such rightful avoidance of useless sacrifice of life as had been commanded by our Lord Himself when He bade the Apostles "When they persecute you in one city, flee

ye into another." For Alexander knew what martyrdom meant. He was made Bishop of Jerusalem under very peculiar circumstances, partly in consequence of what were regarded as Divine monitions, partly on account of what he had bravely endured in the persecution. It was the same to the end of his life. In the year 250 he was brought before the magistrates in the Decian persecution, and thrown into prison, and there he died.

Clement's chief writings form a connected series. First comes the Hortatory Address to the Greeks; the purpose is to shew that the Christian faith accomplishes what the heathen religions and philosophies vainly sought. It is too florid in style, and overloaded with superfluous illustrations. But it is inspired by the purest Christian fervour, and, apart from details, its general drift is at once lofty and true. Next comes the Παιδαγωγός or Tutor. The Tutor is not, as we might have guessed, the book itself; nor is he a man. It is none other than Christ the Word of the Father, the Tutor of mankind, educating them always in love and for their benefit, sometimes by gifts, sometimes by chastisements. The purpose of the book is the

guidance of the youthful convert from heathenism in habits belonging to Christian morality. The heads of this morality are not vague generalities, but practical and concrete enough; e.g. meat and drink, sumptuous furniture, behaviour at feasts, laughter, bad language, social behaviour, use of perfumes and garlands, sleep, marriage duties, dress and ornaments, use of cosmetics, use of baths, exercises. Alexandria seventeen centuries ago was clearly not so very different a place from towns better known to us. The permanent interest of these discussions is very great. Often as we may have to dissent from this or that remark, the wisdom and largemindedness with which the Pædagogus is written are above all praise. On the one hand there is an all-pervading sense that the Gospel is meant to be at once a moulding and a restraining power in all the pettiest details as in the greatest affairs of life: on the other hand there is no morbid jealousy of the rightful use of God's good gifts, and no addiction to restrictions not commanded by morality, or not required for self-discipline.

The third treatise of the series is commonly known by the name στρωματεῖς (stroma*ta*,

common in modern books, is incorrect). A *στρωματεύς* was a long bag of striped canvas, in which bedclothes (*στρώματα*) were kept rolled up. Various writers had used this name for books of the nature of miscellanies. By Clement it is in strictness used only of the seven different books of the great treatise, Στρωματεύς 1, 2 etc. His descriptive title, if less quaint, is more really interesting, "Gnostic jottings" (or "notes") "according to the true philosophy." The Alexandrian convert from heathenism needed instruction not only in the outward behaviour proper to the Christian life but also in the deeper grounds of the Christian morality and religion. In the schools of ordinary Greek philosophy he would learn the value and the dignity of wisdom and knowledge; and now he had to be taught that, whatever might be said to the contrary by unwise Christians, these things had a yet higher place under the Gospel: for the Christ whom it proclaimed was not only the Saviour of mankind in the simplest and most obvious sense, but also One in whom lay hid the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Clement was not made timorous by the association of the word *γνῶσις*, 'knowledge,' with the

sects called heretical of those whom we now call Gnostics. Nay, it rather urged him to claim for the Church a word and an idea which could not be spared. If St Paul had spoken of a Christian Gnosis falsely so called, he had thereby implied that there was a right Christian Gnosis, a Gnosis truly so called; and this is what Clement set himself to defend and in part to provide.

It is a leading idea of Clement that the Divinely ordained preparation for the Gospel ran in two parallel lines, that of the Jewish Law and Prophets and that of Greek philosophy. His exposition of it is somewhat damaged by his following an old but quite unfounded commonplace of Jewish apologetics, much repeated by the Fathers, that the Greek philosophers borrowed largely from the Old Testament. But the idea itself enabled him to look out both on the past history of mankind and on the mixed world around him with a hopeful and helpful faith. The treatise is a very discursive one. The leading heads are such as these:—faith, Christian fear, love, repentance, endurance, martyrdom, the true doctrine of marriage, teaching by signs and allegories, the attribution of human feelings to God in Scripture. There is

much comparison of Christian teaching on these themes with that of Greek philosophers and also of leading Pseudo-Gnostics, usually in a candid and discriminating manner. But it is no merely theoretical knowledge that is here celebrated. The true Gnostic, according to Clement, is "he who imitates God in so far as is possible [for man] omitting nothing pertaining to such growth in the Divine likeness as comes within his reach, practising self-restraint, enduring, living justly, reigning over his passions, imparting of what he possesses, doing good by word and deed to the best of his power. He, it is said, is greatest in the kingdom of heaven who shall do and teach in imitation of God by shewing free grace like His, for the bounties of God are for the common benefit[1]."

The fourth treatise of the series, written after Clement left Alexandria, was called Ὑποτυπώσεις, 'Outlines.' The greater part of it unhappily is lost, though a fair number of difficult but peculiarly interesting fragments of it have been preserved. Its subject was apparently fundamental doctrine, while it also contained expository notes on various books of the Bible,

[1] Clem. Alex. *Strom.* II. p. 480 Potter.

including St Paul's Epistles and four out of the Catholic Epistles. What remains enables us to see that this first great attempt to bring the Gospel into close relation with the whole range of human thought and experience on other lines than those of the Pseudo-Gnostics contained, as was natural, various theological crudities which could not ultimately be accepted; while it must also have been rich in matter of permanent value.

In addition to the great series of four, Clement wrote several minor treatises now almost wholly lost, except a tract on the question "What rich man can be saved?" It contains the well-known beautiful story of St John and the young man who became a bandit.

We must now bid farewell to Clement of Alexandria. He was not, as far as we know, one of those whose writings have exercised a wide or a powerful influence over subsequent theology. Large portions of his field of thought remained for long ages unworked, or even remain unworked still. But what he at once humbly and bravely attempted under great disadvantages at the beginning of the third century will have to be attempted afresh with

the added experience and knowledge of seventeen Christian centuries more, if the Christian faith is to hold its ground among men; and when the attempt is made, not a few of his thoughts and words will probably shine out with new force, full of light for dealing with new problems.

A comparatively simple passage from the *Stromateis*[1] on faith, knowledge, love, will sufficiently illustrate his way of writing.

"Knowledge (i.e. Christian knowledge, Gnosis) is so to speak a perfecting of a man as a man, accomplished through acquaintance with Divine things, in demeanour and life and word, harmonious and concordant with itself and with the Divine Word. For by it faith is perfected, this being the only way in which the man who has faith becomes perfect. Now faith is a kind of inward good, and even without seeking God, it confesses that He is and glorifies Him as being. Hence a man must start from this faith, and when he has made increase in it must by the Grace of God receive as far as he can the knowledge (Gnosis) concerning Him....Not to doubt about God but to believe is the foundation of Gnosis, while Christ is both at once the

[1] Clem. Alex. *Strom.* VII. p. 864 P.

foundation and the structure built upon it, even as through Him is both the beginning of things and their [several] ends. And the things that stand first and last, I mean faith and love, do not come by teaching; but Gnosis transmitted by tradition according to the Grace of God is entrusted as a deposit to those who shew themselves worthy of the teaching; and from Gnosis the dignity of love shines forth, out of light into light. For it is said 'To him that hath shall more be added'; to faith shall be added Gnosis, and to Gnosis love, and to love the inheritance"; i.e. (I suppose) the fulness of Divine Sonship.

I will only add half-a-dozen pregnant lines from another Stromateus[1], expounding by a memorable image the true relation between man and God in prayer. "As," he says, "men attached at sea to an anchor by a tight cable, when they pull at the anchor, draw not the anchor to themselves but themselves to the anchor, even so they who in the Gnostic life draw God to them (i.e. so it seems to them) have unawares been bringing themselves towards God."

[1] Clem. Alex. *Strom.* IV. p. 633 P.

LECTURE V.

TERTULLIAN AND CYPRIAN.

THE last Father whose life and writings came before us was Clement of Alexandria. In him ancient Christian theology in some important respects reaches its highest point. There were after him greater as well as more influential theologians: but with all his very manifest defects there was no one whose vision of what the faith of Jesus Christ was intended to do for mankind was so full or so true.

His great pupil Origen, and one or two of Origen's own pupils, who worthily carried on the tradition of Alexandrian theology, will I hope come before us next time. Meanwhile we must turn aside to-day to a region geographically not remote from Egypt, but in other respects curiously unlike Egypt as regards the Christian theologians whom it bred in the earlier centuries.

The Roman proconsular province of Africa, approximately what we now in Church History for clearness' sake call "North Africa," was, as Mommsen has pointed out, a remarkably insulated region, being shut off from the interior and from the coasts to the East by vast deserts. The most important part of it answers roughly to the modern Tunis, Carthage being the capital. The Mediterranean divided it from Sicily and Italy: but there was close intercourse with Rome by water. Unhappily we know nothing of the foundation or earlier history of the North African Churches. But there is good reason to believe that they first created a Latin Bible. They also probably contributed largely to the creation of the church organisation which became prevalent in the West. They certainly created the distinctively Latin theology, which, developed especially by Augustine, and again by great theologians of the Middle Ages, and again by the leading Continental Reformers of the sixteenth century, has dominated men's thoughts in Western Europe respecting God and man, both for good and for evil. We have to consider to-day the first two great Fathers known to us from the North African Churches,

probably the first two great Fathers whom they produced, Tertullian and Cyprian.

Nearly all that we know about Tertullian is gleaned from his own writings, and that is not much. He was probably born somewhere about the middle of the second century, and himself a native of North Africa. At Carthage he would have the fullest opportunity for acquiring the best culture of the time. Next to Rome, it was the second city of the Western Empire in size and importance; perhaps also, as Mommsen says, the most corrupt city of the West as well as the chief centre of the Latin cultivation and literature. Tertullian's writings shew what full use he made of these opportunities, as regards Greek and Roman literature. His occupation was that of an advocate; and the usual course of a lawyer's training in rhetoric would naturally lead him to spend some time at Athens and at Rome in youth. To an intelligent young lawyer Rome would be a very attractive place just then, on account of the distinguished Roman jurists of the time. All this time Tertullian was assuredly a heathen, and apparently a man of vicious life, as he states himself, and as the foulness which ever afterwards

infested his mind too painfully confirms. How he became a Christian he never tells us directly: but it is tolerably clear that he is reciting his own experience when he more than once speaks of the moral impression produced on beholders by Christian martyrs. So in a famous passage of the *Apologeticum*[1] addressed to the heathen: "We multiply every time that we are mown down by you: the blood of Christians is seed....That very obstinacy which you reproach us with is a teacher. For who when he beholds it is not impelled to examine what are the inner contents of the matter?" Again: "Every one looking on such endurance, smitten as with a kind of scruple, is both enkindled to examine whence it proceeds, and, when he has discovered, himself also at once follows the truth." Within the last few years it has become possible to surmise with some probability what the martyrdoms were which thus changed the course of Tertullian's life. We now know that the year 180, the first year of the Emperor Commodus, was the year when seven men and five women from the African town of Scilla were martyred at

[1] Tert. *Apol.* 50.

Carthage. The Acts of their martyrdom are still extant[1].

Seventeen years later there was again persecution. Apparently the Christians, or some Christians, refused to take part in the public festivities, probably involving idolatrous usages, which greeted the final victory of the Emperor Septimius Severus over other claimants of the imperial authority; and accordingly the existing laws seem to have been put in force against Christians, though probably not by the Emperor himself. At least three of Tertullian's writings are memorials of this time; his great *Apologeticum*, a brilliant and elaborate defence of Christians from the charges of all kinds brought against them, abounding in interesting matter of many kinds, and for its own purpose effective; yet all written with an exuberant cleverness which is too often merely painful. This book was addressed to the governors of provinces, another the *Ad nationes* to the heathen peoples generally, a third *Ad martyres* to the Christian prisoners in North Africa. To this crisis also belong the Acts of Martyrdom of Perpetua and

[1] See Lightfoot's *Apostolic Fathers* (2nd Edition), Ignatius, i. 524 foll.

Felicitas, which, if not written by Tertullian himself, as some think, at all events proceed from that set of North African Christians of which he was the leader, and shew clear signs of a Montanistic feeling. Of all the genuine Acts of Martyrdom that have been preserved to us these are the most interesting.

Taking a second leap of fourteen or fifteen years more, we come to another apologetic book of Tertullian's, addressed to the Proconsul Scapula. Severus had died at York in February 211, and persecution broke out afresh quite early in his successor Caracalla's reign. Thus we have Tertullian coming forward as an apologist at two distinct and distant crises.

But, if he was an energetic defender of the Church, he also became a hardly less energetic assailant of the Church. Jerome writes of him, "Till middle life he was a presbyter of the Church [this by the way is the only evidence we have, though it is probably sufficient, that Tertullian was ever more than a layman]; but," Jerome proceeds, "having afterwards fallen away to the doctrine of Montanus through the envy and contumelies of the clergy of the Roman Church, he refers to the new prophecy

in many books": Jerome then enumerates certain books, now lost, which he calls specially written against the Church. The statement is crude in form, and evidently coloured by reminiscences of Jerome's own quarrels with the Roman clergy of a century and a half later: but the substantial facts were probably to be found in those books now lost. There are sufficient echoes of them in the existing books. Every one must be struck by the parallelism with the story of Hippolytus, all the more when it is remembered that he and Tertullian were contemporaries. In more respects than one they must have had strong mutual sympathies, though Hippolytus, as far as we know, kept clear of those special eccentricities which, as we shall shortly see, were the fundamental cause of Tertullian's eventual separation from the great body of the Church.

The story which we have just been reading carries us to what was doubtless the governing interest of Tertullian's life, his relations to what is called Montanism. This, you will remember, was an enthusiastic popular religious movement, originating in the uplands of Phrygia. It was the erratic form taken by a great impulse

towards reformation which went through various churches late in the second century, partly due to a survival from an earlier stage of Christianity, but still essentially a reaction and an innovation. Briefly, its characteristics were these; first, a strong faith in the Holy Spirit as the promised Paraclete, present as a heavenly power in the Church of the day; secondly, specially a belief that the Holy Spirit was manifesting Himself supernaturally at that day through entranced prophets and prophetesses; and thirdly, an inculcation of a specially stern and exacting standard of Christian morality and discipline on the strength of certain teachings of these prophets. An increase in the numbers and prosperity of the Church having brought an increase of laxity, it was not unnatural that attempts should be made to stem it by a rigorous system of prohibitions. To these three characteristics of Montanism may be added two others, fourthly, a tendency to set up prophets against bishops, the new episcopal organisation being probably favourable to that large inclusiveness of Christian communion in which the Montanists saw only spiritual danger; and fifthly, an eager anticipation of the Lord's

Second Coming as near at hand, and a consequent indifference to ordinary human affairs.

Now it was the rigorous moral legalism of Montanism that probably first attracted Tertullian. With a man of vehement and ill-disciplined character, as he was, and always remained, conversion from heathenism might naturally be accompanied by a violent rebound: and traces of this are seen in what are apparently his earliest writings; and then after a time we find him drawn on from Montanist morality and discipline to belief in the Montanist prophets, and to the ecstatic type of inspiration which they represented, and to their peculiar form of devotion to the Paraclete. But all this time he is simply a partisan within the Church, not in any way separated from it. But there is a third stage in which he writes clearly as the member of a different body, claiming to be made up of 'men of the Spirit,' while he sneers at the members of the great Church (the worldly Church, he would say) as being only *psychici*, 'men of the soul.' In what manner he and his 'men of the Spirit' became finally detached from the Church; whether e.g. they seceded or (more probably) were expelled, we do not know.

Personal squabbles, such as Jerome speaks of, may well have been mixed up with intolerances on either side, or on both. The time when this took place was probably some twenty years more or less from the beginning of the century. Jerome tells us that Tertullian is said to have lived to an extreme old age. This is all that we know.

Besides Tertullian's apologetic writings, nearly all of which have been already noticed, he was the author of a number of tracts of greater or less length addressed to Christians on various subjects belonging to morality or religion; e.g. theatrical representations, idolatry (i.e. as mixed up with various trades and public occupations), the soldier's chaplet (the laurel crown which he held to be implicated in idolatry), flight in persecution, '*scorpiace*' (martyrdom), prayer, patience, baptism, repentance, two books to his wife (against second marriage of women), adornment of women, exhortation to chastity (against second marriage of men), monogamy, modesty (*Pudicitia*, chiefly on the question of admitting penitents), fasting, against the *Psychici*, veiling of virgins, and the cloak (i.e. the philosopher's cloak, as now worn by Christians). Besides these

more or less practical writings, there are eight or nine more of a strictly doctrinal character, chiefly intended directly or indirectly for the confutation of Pseudo-Gnostics or other supposed heretics; but including a very important treatise against Praxeas in which the doctrine of the Trinity is defended against the Roman Sabellians against whom Hippolytus wrote. Three of the treatises bear the titles 'On the Flesh of Christ,' 'On the Resurrection of the Flesh,' 'On the Soul.' Much the longest is the treatise against Marcion in five books, probably founded on earlier Greek writings. In spite of its reckless scurrility of tone, it contains many passages both beautiful and true. The most popular however of all these doctrinal works, and virtually a preface to them, is one entitled 'On the Prescription of Heretics.' The main drift of this most plausible and most mischievous book is this: you try to argue with heretics and to convince them, and you do no good: you discuss Scripture with them and appeal to its authority, and again you do no good: the only way to overcome them is to shut them up sharply with what the Roman law calls Prescription, and tell them *our* belief is the belief of the

Churches which trace back their origin to the Apostles, and therefore it *must* be the true belief. It was pardonable enough that Tertullian should not have in mind the living growth of belief which had been always going on in these very churches. But it is another thing to find him making war on all free action of the mind and conscience in the things of faith, and assuming that there are no depths of Divine truth beyond the doctrines which men have been able to formulate for public acceptance. His complaint is not only against 'heretics' but also against '*nostri*': he names no names, but what he says seems specially directed against Clement of Alexandria. It grieves him much that an appeal is made to our Lord's words "Seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened to you"; which he explains away by a series of ingenuities, beginning with the assertions that having been uttered early in our Lord's ministry, while He was as yet imperfectly known, they ceased to be true afterwards, and that they were addressed to the Jews alone.

This is a sufficient illustration of Tertullian's characteristic defects. To understand him rightly we must remember that under the

Roman lawyer was probably hidden the man of Carthaginian i.e. the Phœnician blood. As in the case of Tatian, his utter want of sympathy with Greek and Roman greatness is probably due to the inborn sense of alien race. To the same source may perhaps be also traced his violence, his passion for bitter antagonisms. But it is a relief to read the touching words in which, writing on Patience, he bewails his own want of it. "It will be a kind of solace to dispute about that which it is not given me to enjoy, like sick men, who, since they are removed from health, do not know how to cease speaking about its advantages. So I poor wretch (miserrimus ego), always sick with the heats of impatience, must needs sigh after and call after and discourse about that health of patience which I fail to possess.... Patience is so set at the head of the things of God, that no one can observe any precept, or perform any work well pleasing to the Lord, if he be a stranger to patience."

Apart from the infectiousness of his intolerance, Tertullian did serious injury to the Church of his own age and of later ages by beginning the process of casting the language of theology in the moulds supplied by the law courts. In

the Bible legal images take their place among a variety of other images; but that is quite another thing from the supremacy which legal conceptions of spiritual things acquired through the reckless use of legal phraseology. But, when the worst is said, Tertullian remains one of the greatest of the Fathers, always needing to be read with the utmost caution, but almost always amply worth reading; not the less perhaps because it needs some labour to extract the meaning from his closely condensed and epigrammatic sentences. He is a man of true genius; and not that only but also a man of warm and passionate Christian feeling; and moreover one who, despite the obstacles created by his own theories, had a keen eye for many not obvious aspects of truth, which presented themselves to him for the most part in sudden flashes, and so by their frequent contradictions reflect the moods of a fiery soul, itself always full of contradictions.

As a sample of his more quiet controversial vein, in which he is something much better than controversial, we may take a few words of his on the creation of man, in refutation of Marcion's theory that the God of creation and of the

Law was only a just God, not a good God[1]. The exaggerations here and there do not spoil the general drift. "Meanwhile the world consisted of all good things, thereby sufficiently shewing beforehand how much good was in store for him for whom this whole [sum of things] was being prepared. Lastly, who could be worthy to inhabit the works of God but His own image and likeness? That also was wrought by Goodness... Goodness spoke [the words], Goodness fashioned man out of slime into such a substance of flesh built up into so many qualities out of one matter, Goodness breathed [into him] making him a soul that was living, not dead. Goodness set him to enjoy and reign over all things, and moreover to give them names. Goodness yet further bestowed fresh enjoyment on man, that, although a possessor of the whole world, he should dwell in a specially pleasant region by being shifted into Paradise, already out of a world into a Church. The same goodness provided also a help for him, that nothing good might be wanting; for it is not good, God said, that man be alone: He knew that man would profit by the sex of Mary and thenceforward of

[1] Tertullian *adv. Marc.* ii. 4.

the Church. [In this curious limitation the Montanist speaks.] But even the Law which thou blamest, which thou twistest into themes of controversy, it was Goodness that enacted it for the sake of man, that he might cleave to God, for fear he should seem not so much free as abandoned, on a level with his minions the other living creatures who had been cast loose by (from?) God and were free through His scorn of them; but that man alone might have the boast of having been alone worthy to receive a Law from God, and that, being a reasonable living creature with a capacity for understanding and knowledge, he might be held in likewise by that very liberty which belongs to reason, being subject to Him who had subjected to him all things. And in like manner it was Goodness that wrote on this law the counsel of observing it, 'In the day that ye eat thereof, ye shall surely die', for it graciously shewed the issue of transgression, for fear ignorance of the danger should help towards neglect of obedience....I call on thee therefore to recognise thus far the goodness of our God as shewn by works that were good, by blessings that were good, by acts of indulgence, by acts of Providence, by

laws and forewarnings that were good and gracious."

Jerome tells us that once in North Italy he had met an old man who told him how when *he* was quite young he had in like manner seen at Rome a man of great age, formerly a notary of Cyprian's, and had heard from him how Cyprian was accustomed to pass no day without reading something of Tertullian's, and how he used often to say to him "Give me the Teacher," meaning Tertullian. This curious little reminiscence links together the two greatest men in the North African Church before Augustine. Strictly speaking Cyprian was not a theologian, while he was a great ecclesiastical ruler. His writings shew hardly any appropriation of the deeper elements in Tertullian's thoughts, those in which he claims affinity to Greek theology, perhaps partly due to borrowing from it: but the Roman legalism, which was so potent an ingredient in Tertullian's ways of thinking and speaking, acquired still greater force in its guidance of a man of simpler and more direct mind like Cyprian, accustomed through life to derive his thoughts of social order from the provincial administration of the Roman Empire, and when

he had become a Christian bishop, writing almost always under the impulse of grave practical responsibilities. The depth and purity of his own religious feeling makes itself felt almost everywhere in his writings: yet the conceptions of the Church and its institutions which he sets forth, and which thenceforward dominated Latin Christianity, were indeed most natural under their circumstances of time and place, but not less truly involved injurious limitations and perversions of the full teaching of the Apostles.

We have the great good fortune of possessing a large amount of Cyprian's correspondence during the last ten years or so of his life, and also a memoir of him by his deacon Pontius. We have also from his pen about a dozen tracts on religious or disciplinary subjects. He bears well the testing of his inner self which these materials render possible. There is nothing petty and nothing ungoverned about him. He is always pursuing high ends according to the best of his lights with entire self devotion and seldom failing in patience and gentleness. He lived habitually in accordance with what he wrote in his early tract to his friend Donatus[1].

[1] Cypr. *ad Donat.* 4. 5.

"To God belongs whatever power we have. From that source we draw our life, from that source we draw our strength, from that source is taken and embraced the energy by which, while still placed here, we discern beforehand the signs of the things to come. Let only there be fear to guard innocence, that the Lord, who by the visitation of the heavenly mercy has graciously shone into our minds, may be held fast through righteous conduct as the guest of a mind that delights Him, lest the security thus received breed heedlessness and the old enemy steal in anew."..."The Spirit," he proceeds, "streams forth incessantly, overflows abundantly: let only our breast be athirst and open: as is [the measure] of faith to receive that we bring to it, such is [the measure] of inflowing grace that we drink in."

Cyprian was apparently converted to the Gospel in middle life. He was what we should call a country gentleman, and at the same time a man of good Latin education. Not long after he became a Christian he sold his estates, wholly or in part, to give the proceeds to the poor; though ultimately they were restored to him by the liberality of friends. Very early after his baptism he was admitted to the presbyterate,

and shortly afterwards, while still accounted a neophyte, he was elected Bishop of Carthage. He was evidently popular with the laity, with whom the election seems to have chiefly rested. His social position by itself could hardly have won for him such a mark of confidence: doubtless he was already before his conversion known as a man of virtuous life and high public spirit. It was no light task that was laid on him by his election. Persecution had slumbered for about a generation, and as a consequence various abuses had sprung up in the Church, the bishops and clergy not excepted. But after a year and a half came the persecution of Decius, the same persecution in which, as we saw last week, Alexander Bishop of Jerusalem perished in prison. Its fires were not without a purifying effect on the Christian community: but it shortly gave rise to a difficult question of discipline which much exercised Cyprian, the treatment of those who had "lapsed" or fallen away under terror of death or torments. On the one hand there was a strong party of mere laxity at Carthage, on the other a strong party of unswerving and indiscriminating severity at Rome; and the controversy was complicated by purely

personal elements, Cyprian's election not having been by any means universally acceptable. Of course it would be impossible to give now a narrative of the complicated transactions at Carthage and at Rome. It must suffice to say that Cyprian took an intermediate and carefully discriminative course, and that his policy was at last substantially adopted, though presently he was constrained by the force of circumstances, and especially a lesser persecution under Gallus, to accept a more indulgent set of rules than at first.

Presently North Africa was invaded by a terrible pestilence from the East which lasted on for long years afterwards. Cyprian instantly stood forward to organise his Christian flock for measures of help and relief, pecuniary and personal, insisting strongly on the duty of helping heathens as well as Christians in the spirit of true Sonship, following the example of Him who sends His rain and sunshine on all alike.

Presently a fresh controversy arose when Stephen became Bishop of Rome. The former controversy had left behind it an unhappy schism, the followers of Novatian having split

off from the Church at large in the name of stricter discipline. The question now was whether persons having received Novatianist baptism, and subsequently joining the Church, needed to be baptised over again, or only to be received with laying on of hands. On this point Cyprian threw all his strength into the stricter theory, which had been falling into disuse in the West; and induced a large synod of North African Bishops to support it unanimously; while Stephen upheld the view that ultimately became fixed in the West, condemning such a repetition of baptism: only unfortunately he upheld it with much violence and intolerance.

Stephen died in August 257. In the same month a fresh persecution began under Valerian, and Cyprian was at once banished, though treated with remarkable respect and forbearance by the heathen authorities; and in his banishment he devoted himself to plans for help of other sufferers. But in about a year the persecution assumed a more terrible form. Xystus Bishop of Rome was beheaded as he sat preaching in his episcopal chair in one of the Roman cemeteries, and Cyprian returned to Carthage to await his now inevitable doom. The trial took

place. The sentence was read "It is decreed that Thascius Cyprianus be executed by the sword." The record then proceeds "Cyprian the Bishop said, 'Thanks be to God'."

LECTURE VI.

ORIGEN.

In the last two lectures the Fathers who have come before us have all belonged to Africa. It will be the same to-day. We return now from North Africa, and the two great Fathers whom at this early time it brought forth for Latin theology, to Egypt and to the most characteristically Greek theology.

If the influence of Clement of Alexandria over the later times of early Christianity was less than we might have expected, the same cannot be said of his great pupil Origen. Not only had he the veneration of devoted disciples for several generations; but the theologies built up in the succeeding centuries of the age of the Fathers would, as far as we can see, have been very different from what they actually were, had

it not been for the foundations laid by him. Above all, his influence as an interpreter of the Bible, direct and indirect, has been both wide and lasting. In the ancient Church three men stand out above all others as having left a deep mark by their independent interpretation of Scripture. The other two are Theodore of Mopsuestia (late in the fourth century), the highest representative of the School of Antioch, and (a generation later) Augustine the North African, the primary teacher of the Latin West. Not the least interesting fact however in the history of the influence of Origen as an interpreter is the way in which his thoughts and often his words were appropriated and handed on by Latin Fathers, and especially the three greatest Latin Fathers of the fourth century, Hilary of Poitiers (theologically the greatest of them all), Ambrose and Jerome. In this manner, as well as by direct translations of some of Origen's works, Origenian ideas, penetrating down through various channels, supplied a by no means insignificant element in the very miscellaneous body of traditional interpretation which prevailed till the fresh and open study of the meaning of Scripture was restored, chiefly by

the Revivers of learning just before the Reformation and by some of the Reformers themselves. The permanent value of his interpretation of Scripture is much lessened by the fact that, in common with most ancient interpreters outside the School of Antioch, he shews an excessive devotion to allegorical senses: yet along with this mere fancifulness we find in him evidence of a genuine and profound study of the words of Scripture. For all his great and lasting influence, Origen's name has been by no means surrounded with the halo of conventional glory which has traditionally adorned Fathers inferior to him in every way. Some of his speculations were doubtless crude and unsatisfactory: but these are but trifles beside the vast services which he rendered to theology; and accordingly, every now and then, from Athanasius onwards, he has received cordial words of vindication from men who were able to recognise goodness and greatness, in spite of an unpopular name.

Unlike the Fathers whom we have been lately considering, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Cyprian, Origen had the blessing of Christian parentage, and received from his father Leonides a careful education both in the ordinary

Greek culture of the day and in the study of Scripture, becoming the pupil of Clement. He was not seventeen when that persecution of about the year 202 under Septimius Severus occurred which drove Clement from Alexandria, and Leonides was thrown into prison. Origen himself, being restrained by a device of his mother's from rushing to join him in the anticipated martyrdom, wrote to him entreating that no care for his family should be allowed to shake his constancy. On his father's martyrdom, with confiscation of goods, he provided for his own and his mother's and six brothers' wants by teaching, except that he was lodged by a lady of wealth. Some heathens came to him for instruction, including Plutarchus, who was martyred, and Heraclas, who became Bishop of Alexandria; and thus he was led to take up, though in an informal way, the dropped work of the Catechetical School. After a time he was placed formally at its head by the Bishop Demetrius. For some twelve years he went on without other interruption than a short visit to Rome and another to Arabia, lecturing to large audiences as a layman, living a sternly rigorous and self-denying life. To this time belongs the rash act

of self-mutilation always associated with his name, suggested to him by a misunderstanding of the real drift of one of our Lord's sayings. Meanwhile he laboured to fit himself for his work more and more. On the one hand he studied Hebrew; on the other he attended the lectures of the most eminent heathen philosophers, that he might be 'better able to understand the thoughts of those' who came to him for help. The work increased so much that he associated with himself his convert Heraclas.

At length about the year 215 he was driven by tumults to leave Alexandria, as Clement had done, and took refuge for a considerable time at Cæsarea, the Greek or Roman capital of Palestine. Alexander, now Bishop of Jerusalem, of whom we heard a fortnight ago, and the Bishop of Cæsarea joined in inviting him to preach (ὁμιλεῖν) to the assembled congregation. On receiving a remonstrance from Demetrius at their permitting a layman to preach before bishops, they cited various precedents in defence of their action. But Demetrius refused to give way, and fetched Origen back to Alexandria in a peremptory way. After his return he was persuaded by Ambrosius, now a friend, formerly

a convert of his from some Pseudo-Gnostic sect, to undertake commentaries in writing, for which purpose Ambrosius provided short-hand writers.

But after Origen had taught at Alexandria for about a quarter of a century, his career there came to a painful end. The Churches of Achaia, being much distracted by what were called heresies (of what kind, is not related), invited him to come to their help. He started without obtaining license from Demetrius (but under what circumstances we do not know), and took his way through Palestine. There he was ordained presbyter by the Bishop of Cæsarea, with Alexander's knowledge and approval. He then completed his journey to Greece, making sojourns at Ephesus and Athens, and at length returned home. His reception there is a sad one to read of. Demetrius assembled "a synod of bishops and of certain presbyters," by whom he was forbidden to teach or even reside in Alexandria. They did not agree to reject his ordination, as apparently Demetrius wished: but this too he obtained from a subsequent smaller meeting of bishops alone. Our too fragmentary authorities do not tell us quite clearly the ground of condem-

nation. Apparently it was the ordination of one who was mutilated, though it is also possible that doctrinal differences and it may be even personal jealousies were unavowed motives of action. There is reason to believe that the Roman Church supported the action of Demetrius; but it was entirely ignored by the Bishops of Asia; those of Palestine, Arabia, Phœnicia (i.e. probably North Syria) and Achaia being specially mentioned. Origen left Alexandria for ever, and though beloved disciples of his own succeeded Demetrius as bishop, apparently no attempt was made to undo the banishment. Gentlest, humblest, and most peace-loving of men, Origen would be the last to disturb the peace of the Church for his own sake.

Accordingly for the third time he betook himself to the friendly Cæsarea, and there in the great seaport beside the Mediterranean he made his permanent home for the rest of his life, above twenty years. Being welcomed and cherished by the two Palestinian Bishops of whom we heard before, he carried on his literary work as a Christian theologian with the help of Ambrosius, and at the same time resumed oral instruction, partly by expository sermons of a

comparatively simple kind in Church, partly by more advanced lectures to students and philosophical enquirers, as at the Catechetical School of Alexandria.

With this period are specially connected the names of two illustrious disciples, Firmilianus and Gregory of Neocæsarea. Firmilianus was apparently already bishop of the Cappadocian Cæsarea, the capital of the inland regions of Eastern Asia Minor, when this recorded intercourse with Origen took place, though it may well have begun at an earlier time. Sometimes he used to get Origen to come to visit him in Cappadocia to instruct his Churches; sometimes he used to make stays in Palestine to have the personal benefit of hearing Origen discourse. A man of still greater eminence in the years after the middle of the third century was Gregory Bishop of Neocæsarea in Pontus. According to his own narrative he had travelled to Palestine to educate himself as an advocate by study at Beirût, where there was a famous School of Roman Law; but before fixing himself there, he had travelled on to Cæsarea with his sister, whose husband held an official post there. Beirût however was soon given up. He fell

(with his brother) under the spell of Origen's teaching and personal presence, and remained under his instruction for five years. On his departure he delivered an address in expression of his gratitude, and this address is still extant. In it he describes how he first came under Origen, and how Origen dealt with him and with other pupils. First came a training in the faculties of the mind, a pruning away of wild growths of opinion for opinion's sake, an enforcement of clear thinking and exact speaking. Then came the study of the visible order of nature, founded on the study of geometry. Thirdly, came Christian ethics as founded on godliness, which he called the beginning and the end of all the virtues. Having passed through these preliminary stages of mental discipline, Origen's pupils were encouraged to read freely in the works of Greek poets and philosophers, and then, thus prepared, to enter on the study of Christian theology proper, more especially in its primary source, the Bible.

Such was the method of Origen's regular teaching at Cæsarea. But he did not refuse invitations to leave home for a while, and give help to other Churches. Some time, we know,

he spent at Athens. Twice he was asked to come into Arabia to help in neutralising false doctrines which had arisen there. In each case, instead of using declamation and anathemas, he sought quiet conference with the men who had propounded these doctrines; and in each case succeeded in persuading them that they had been in error. If later controversies had been dealt with in the same spirit, what a different Christendom and a different world would now be meeting our eyes!

Our first glimpse of Origen was as a boy, encouraging his father to face martyrdom without hesitation, undistracted by any anxieties for his helpless family. A third of a century later a similar task fell to his lot. The emperor Alexander Severus, who had been friendly to the Christians, and with whose mother Mamæa Origen had had some intercourse, had come to a violent end, and his murderer and successor Maximinus entered on a persecution of such Christians, it would seem, as had stood in special favour with Alexander. Origen was apparently saved by a Christian Cappadocian lady, Juliana, who kept him out of harm's way. But Ambrosius and a presbyter of Cæsarea were

imprisoned, and to them Origen wrote an Exhortation which we still possess.

But fifteen years later, or less, he had to suffer grievously in his own person. In that persecution of Decius in which his old fellow-student and supporter Alexander died in prison, he too was cast into prison, and had to undergo a succession of tortures. Decius' reign was a short one; and on his death Origen was released from prison, shattered by the treatment which he had received, and two years later he died at Tyre, being not far from 70 years of age. His tomb in the Cathedral of Tyre is several times in the early Middle Ages noticed as then still visible, and the inscription of it still later; and a tradition of his place of burial is still said to be current in the neighbourhood. Though he does not bear the conventional title of Saint, no saintlier man is to be found in the long line of ancient Fathers of the Church.

One of the best known sentences of Butler's Analogy, occurring in the Introduction, is to this effect: "Hence, namely from analogical reasoning, Origen has with singular sagacity observed, that *he who believes the Scripture to have proceeded from him who is the Author of*

Nature, may well expect to find the same sort of difficulties in it, as are found in the constitution of Nature." These few words are characteristic of the subjects of Origen's writings. He was deeply and reverently occupied in meditation on all things in heaven and earth of which the human mind can take any cognisance; but the Bible was the centre of all his thoughts and of all his studies. He wrote commentaries or preached homilies, taken down by rapid writers, on a large proportion of books of both Testaments. What is lost was far more than what is preserved: but we still have much, large portions of the commentaries on St Matthew and St John, that on the Romans in a too free Latin condensed translation, some Homilies on Jeremiah, many Greek fragments on various books, and many Latin translations of Homilies, chiefly on the Old Testament. A biblical work of another kind was what is called Origen's Hexapla, an arrangement of the books of the Old Testament in (for the most part) six parallel columns, each containing a distinct text, the Hebrew, the same in Greek letters, the Septuagint, and three other Greek translations. Numerous detached readings copied from it have

been preserved, but hardly more. By this combination of texts Origen hoped to throw light on the meaning of many passages in which a Greek reader would be either bewildered or misled if he had only the Septuagint before him. Besides the *Exhortation to Martyrdom* mentioned before, we possess a very interesting little treatise of Origen's on Prayer. Very little unhappily remains of his letters, of which a collection was made some time after his death. But we fortunately possess in one shape or other what were probably his two greatest works, the systematic doctrinal treatise on *First Principles*, written before his departure from Alexandria, preserved for the most part only in a too free Latin version; and the eight books against Celsus in the original Greek, written near the end of his life. In connexion with Origen's writings it is worth while to mention the *Philocalia*, a small collection of extracts from them chiefly bearing on the interpretation of Scripture, made late in the fourth century by Basil and Gregory of Nazianza. It was from this source that Butler made his quotation, and the little book deserves to be better known.

As an easy specimen of the book on First

Principles, which chiefly consists of somewhat difficult speculative meditations, we may take a passage on the thirst for Divine knowledge implanted in the heart of man, and, however little he may know in this life, intended to render him capable of even higher levels of knowledge in the stages of the future life.

"Therefore, as in those crafts which are accomplished by hand, we can perceive by our understanding the reason which determines what a thing is to be, how it is to be made and for what purposes, while the actual work is accomplished by the service of the hands; so in the works of God which are wrought by His own hand, we must understand that the reason and designs of the things which we see made by Him, remain unseen. And just as, when our eye has seen things made by the craftsman, the mind, on observing something made with especial skill, is forthwith anxious to enquire in what fashion or manner or for what purposes the thing has been made; so much more and in an incomparably higher degree the mind is anxious with an unspeakable longing to recognise the reason of the things which we behold made by God. This longing, this ardent desire, has we

believe without doubt been implanted in us by God: and, just as the eye naturally requires light and object of vision, and our body by nature demands food and drink, so our intellect is possessed with a fit and natural desire for knowing the truth of God and discovering the causes of things. Now this desire we have received from God not in order that it should never be satisfied or be capable of satisfaction: otherwise vainly will the love of truth appear to have been implanted in our intellect by God the Creator, if it is made never capable of satisfying its longing. Wherefore even in this life those who have laboriously given their attention to godly and religious meditations, even though they obtain but a small amount from the great and infinite treasures of the Divine wisdom, yet just because they keep their minds and attention turned towards these subjects and outstrip themselves in this desire, receive much profit from the very fact that they are directing their minds to the search and love of discovering truth and making them more ready to receive future instruction: just as, when a man wishes to paint a portrait, if a pencil sketch in bare outline first marks out the plan of the coming picture, and pre-

pares marks on which the features may be laid, the rough outline doubtless is found more ready to receive the true colours; so may a mere sketch, a rough outline by the pencil of our Lord Jesus Christ, be traced on the tablets of our heart. And perhaps it is for this reason that it is said, 'For to everyone that hath shall it be given, and it shall be added to him.' Whence it is certain that to those who possess in this life a sort of rough outline of truth and knowledge shall be added in the future the beauty of the perfect picture. Such, I imagine, was the desire indicated by him who said 'But I am constrained in two ways, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, for it is far better'; knowing that when he had returned to Christ, he would recognise more clearly the reasons of all things which are done on earth[1]."

The Books against Celsus contain at once the best and the most comprehensive defence of the Christian faith which has come down to us from the days of the Fathers. They defend it not against popular prejudice and malice only, as the early Apologists had done, but against the careful and powerful indictment laid

[1] Origen, ii. IV. p. 236. Redep. (ii. XI. 4, 5).

by an earnest though scoffing heathen philosopher who was also apparently an accomplished Roman lawyer, writing in the name of the highest philosophy of the time, and passionately devoted to the welfare of the Roman Empire. A long time had passed between the writing of Celsus' "True Account," as he called his literary onslaught on the Christians and their faith, and its coming into Origen's hands. He had no real knowledge about the author, but he evidently felt that if he could answer *him* successfully, he would practically have effectually upheld the cause of the Gospel at all points. If he sometimes fails to understand on what this or that smart saying of Celsus' really rested, he never shows the unfairness of the mere partisan. The candour and patience of his treatise are among its brightest qualities.

The whole treatise amply repays reading and re-reading: one passage however must now suffice. It is the reply to Celsus' scoff about the lateness of the Incarnation and its limitation to an obscure corner of the world, a scoff in form, but covering a serious question. As regards the time, Celsus compared it to the comic poet's representation of Zeus as waking out of sleep

and suddenly sending Hermes to men. As regards the place, he asked why God did not breathe souls into many bodies, and send them all over the earth. Here is the answer.

"Observe here too Celsus' want of reverence when he most unphilosophically brings in a comic poet, whose object is to raise a laugh, and compares our God the Creator of the Universe with the god in his play who on awaking despatches Hermes. We have said above that, when God sent Jesus to the human race, it was not as though He had just awoken from a long sleep, but Jesus, though He has only now for worthy reasons fulfilled the divine plan of His incarnation, has at all times been doing good to the human race. For no noble deed among men has ever been done without the Divine Word visiting the souls of those who even for a brief space were able to receive such operations of the Divine Word. Nay even the appearance of Jesus in one corner of the world (as it seems) has been brought about for a worthy reason: since it was necessary that He of whom the prophets spoke should appear among those who had learnt one God, who read His prophets and recognised Christ preached in them, and that He

should appear at a time when the Word was about to be diffused from one corner to the whole world.

"Wherefore also there was no need that many bodies should be made everywhere, and many spirits like to that of Jesus, in order that the whole world of men might be illumined by the Word of God. For it sufficed that the one Word rising like the Sun of Righteousness from Judæa should send forth His speedy rays into the soul of them that were willing to receive Him. And if anyone does wish to see many bodies filled with a divine Spirit, ministering like Him the one Christ to the salvation of men in every place, let him take note of those who in all places do honestly and with an upright life teach the word of Jesus, who are themselves too called 'Christs' ('anointed ones') in the passage 'Touch not mine anointed ones and do my prophets no harm.' For even as we have heard that antichrist comes and nevertheless have learnt that there are many antichrists in the world, even so, when we recognise that Christ has come, we observe that owing to Him many Christs have been born in the world, to wit all those that like Him have loved righteous-

ness and hated iniquity: and for this reason God, the God of Christ, anointed them too with the oil of gladness. But He however, having loved righteousness and hated iniquity to a higher degree than those who are His partners, has also received the first-fruits of the anointing, and, if we may so term it, has received the entire unction of the oil of gladness: while they that were His partners partook also in His unction each according to his capacity.

"Wherefore, since Christ is the head of the Church, so that Christ and His Church are one body, the ointment has descended from the head to the beard (the symbol of the full-grown man Aaron), and this ointment in its descent reached to the skirts of his clothing. This is my answer to Celsus' impious speech when he says that 'God ought to have breathed His Spirit into many bodies in like manner and to have sent them forth throughout the world.' So then while the comic poet to raise a laugh has represented Zeus as asleep and as waking up and sending Hermes to the Greeks, let the Word which knows that the nature of God is sleepless teach us that God with regard to seasons orders the affairs of the world as reason

demands. But it is not to be wondered at, if, seeing that the judgments of God are sublime and hard to interpret, uninstructed souls do err, and Celsus among them.

"There is then nothing absurd in the fact that to the Jews, with whom were the prophets, the Son of God was sent; so that beginning with them in bodily form He might arise in power and spirit upon a world of souls desiring to be no longer bereft of God[1]."

At Origen's death in the year 253 we are still nearly half a century from the end of the first three centuries, and nearly three-quarters of a century from the Council of Nicæa. If time permitted, it would not be difficult to give some account of Fathers belonging to this interval who are quite worthy of being known. At the same time it is true that we have only fragments, sometimes hardly that, of the men who seem as if they had been best worth knowing. Moreover, with the exception of the almost forgotten Lucianus of Antioch, they seem to have been less original and important Fathers than nearly all those who have come before us this term. The most attractive group is formed by the

[1] Origen adv. Celsum, vi. 78 foll.

disciples of Origen, not only the two already spoken of, but Heraclas, and Pierius, and Dionysius of Alexandria of whom we can obtain a tolerably vivid and very pleasant image from the fragments of his letters preserved by Eusebius, shewing how a great bishop trained by Origen would deal with the difficult questions raised by persecution without and false doctrine within. Then would come Pamphilus, the loving collector of memorials of Origen and zealous champion of his good name against the detractors who were beginning to assail it; himself a martyr in the terrible last persecution at the beginning of the fourth century. And Pamphilus in turn leads to his younger friend Eusebius the historian, who lived and wrote in the fourth century, and yet might in some ways be called the last of the Ante-Nicene Fathers.

But we must be content with this very hurried glance at that most important but most obscure time between the death of Origen and Cyprian and the Council of Nicæa. A better break than at the death of Origen we could hardly desire. Not to speak of the men of later days, looking only at those other Fathers who have come before us this term, we cannot help

recognising that they had often work given them to do which he could not do; and that they were enabled to see some truths which he could not see. But he is for us practically the last and most characteristic of the early Fathers, properly so called, the Fathers who lived while Christian thought could still be free, and while Christian faith still embraced the whole world. From all these early Fathers taken together, you will, I trust, have gained the feeling, if you had it not already, that Christian pastors and teachers in this nineteenth century can ill afford to neglect the thoughts and aspirations of those earliest Christian ages, though, like the thoughts and aspirations of all intervening times, they must remain a dead letter to us till they are interpreted by the thoughts and aspirations of our own time as shone upon by the light of the Spirit who is the teacher of Christ's disciples in every succeeding age.

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